CHAPTER 12

Sludge Processing and Disposal

12.1 General

- 12.1.1 Definition
- 12.1.2 Total Systems Approach To Design
- 12.1.3 Recycle Streams
- 12.1.4 Multiple Units
- 12.1.5 Sludge Pumps
- 12.1.6 Sludge Piping

12.2 Sludge Production

12.3 Thickening

- 12.3.1 General
- 12.3.2 Gravity Thickeners
- 12.3.3 Flotation Thickeners
- 12.3.4 Centrifugal Thickeners
- 12.3.5 Other Thickeners

12.4 Conditioning

- 12.4.1 General
- 12.4.2 Chemical

12.5 Digestion

- 12.5.1 Anaerobic Digestion
- 12.5.2 Aerobic Sludge Digestion

12.6 Composting

12.7 Sludge Dewatering

- 12.7.1 General
- 12.7.2 Sludge Drying Beds
- 12.7.3 Mechanical Dewatering

12.8 Sludge Storage Lagoons

12.9 Sludge Disposal

SLUDGE PROCESSING AND DISPOSAL

12.1 General

12.1.1 Definition

Sludge is a broad term used to describe the various aqueous suspensions of solids encountered during treatment of sewage. The nature and concentration of the solids control the processing characteristics of the sludge. Grit screenings and scum are not normally considered as sludge and therefore are not discussed in this section.

12.1.2 Total Systems Approach to Design

The most frequently encountered problem in wastewater treatment plant design is the tendancy to optimize a given subsystem, such as sludge dewatering, without considering the side effects of this optimization on the overall plant operation and treatment costs.

Sludge handling processes can be classified as thickening, conditioning, stabilization, dewatering, and disposal. Numerous process alternatives exist within each of these categories. Each unit process should be evaluated as part of the total system, keeping in mind that the objective is to use that group of processes that provides the most cost-effective method of sludge disposal.

The analysis should include a materials balance to identify the amounts of material which enter, leave, accumulate, or are depleted in the given process and the system as a whole. Energy requirements should also be provided to aid in determining capital and operating costs of the total system.

12.1.3 Recycle Streams

Recycle streams from the process alternatives, including thickener overflow, centrate, filtrate, and supernatant, should be returned to the sewage treatment process at appropriate points to maintain effluent quality within the limits established. Volume and strength of each recycle stream should be considered in the plant design. Sidestream treatment should be provided if the load is not included in the plant design or if the side stream will upset the treatment process. Equalization of side streams should be considered to reduce instantaneous loading on the treatment process.

12.1.4 Multiple Units

Multiple units and/or storage facilities should be provided so that individual units may be taken out of service without unduly interrupting plant operation.

12.1.5 Sludge Pumps

12.1.5.1 Capacity

Pump capacities should be adequate to maintain pipeline velocities of 3 feet per second. Provisions for varying pump capacity are desirable.

12.1.5.2 Duplicate Units

Duplicate units shall be provided where failure of one unit would seriously hamper plant operation.

12.1.5.3 Type

Plunger pumps, progressing cavity pumps, or other types of pumps with demonstrated solids handling capability should be provided for handling raw sludge.

12.1.5.4 Minimum Head

A minimum positive head of 24 inches (or the manufacturer's recommendation) should be provided at the suction side of centrifugal-type pumps and is desirable for all types of sludge pumps. Maximum suction lifts should not exceed 10 feet (or the manufacturer's recommendation) for plunger pumps.

12.1.5.5 Sampling Facilities

Unless sludge sampling facilities are otherwise provided, quick-closing sampling valves should be installed at the sludge pumps. The size of valve and piping should be at least 1-1/2 inches.

12.1.6 Sludge Piping

12.1.6.1 Size and Head

Sludge withdrawal piping shall have a minimum diameter of 8 inches for gravity withdrawal and 6 inches for pump suction and discharge lines. Where withdrawal is by gravity, the available head on the discharge pipe should be at least 2 feet and preferably more, with provisions to backflush the line.

12.1.6.2 Slope

Gravity piping shall be laid on uniform grade and alignment. Slope on gravity discharge piping should not be less than 3 percent.

12.1.6.3 Cleaning

Provision should be made for draining and flushing suction and discharge lines. Where sludge pumps are available, piping should be such that suction lines can be backflushed with pump discharge or rodded. Glass-lined or equivalent pipe should be considered for raw sludge piping and scum lines.

12.1.6.4 Corrosion Resistance

Special consideration shall be given to the corrosion resistance and continuing stability of pipes and supports located inside digestion tanks.

12.2 Sludge Production

The sludge production rates listed in the literature have often been shown to be underestimated. The sludge production rates (SPR) listed below in Table 12-1 have been determined from various studies and provide a more realistic basis for designing solids handling facilities. <u>These values shall be used for design unless other acceptable data is submitted</u>.

Table 12-1
Sludge Production Rates

Type of Treatment	**SPR (lb sludge) / (lb BOD removed)**
Conventional Activated Sludge	**0.85**
Extended Aeration	**0.75**
Contact Stabilization	**1.00**
Other Activated Sludge	**0.85**
Trickling Filter	**0.75**
Roughing Filters	**1.00**

12.3 Thickening

12.3.1 General

The cost-effectiveness of sludge thickening should be considered prior to treatment and/or disposal.

12.3.1.1 Capacity

Thickener design should provide adequate capacity to meet peak demands.

12.3.1.2 Septicity

Thickener design should provide means to prevent septicity during the thickening process. Odor consideration should be considered.

12.3.1.3 Continuous Return

Thickeners should be provided with a means of continuous return of supernatant for treatment. Provisions for side-stream treatment of supernatant may be required.

12.3.1.4 Chemical Addition

Consideration should be given to the use of chemicals or polymer to improve solids capture in the thickening process. This will not normally increase the solids level of the thickened sludge.

12.3.2 Gravity Thickeners

12.3.2.1 Stirring and skimming

Mechanical thickeners should employ pickets on rake arms for continuous gentle stirring of the sludge. Skimmers should be considered for use with biological sludges.

12.3.2.2 Depth and Freeboard

Tank depth shall be sufficient so that solids will be retained for a period of time needed to thicken the sludge to the required concentration and to provide storage for fluctuations in solids loading rates.

The thickener should be operated to avoid denitrification. At least two feet of freeboard shall be provided above the maximum water level.

12.3.2.3 Continuous Thickening

Variable-speed sludge draw-off pumps may be provided so that thickening can be continuous, or an adjustable on-off time clock control for pulse withdrawal may be used with constant-speed pumps to improve control over the thickening.

12.3.2.4 Solids and Surface Loading Rates

The engineer shall provide the design basis and calculations for the solids and surface loading rates and the support calculations upon request. Thickener solids loading rates vary with the type of sludge. Some typical solids loading rates are given below in Table 12-2. These values shall be used for design unless other acceptable data are submitted. For loading rates of other type sludges, refer to Table 5.2 of the EPA Process Design Manual-Sludge Treatment and Disposal.

Table 12-2
Solids Loading Rate

Type of Sludge	**(lb/day/sq ft)**
Primary	20-30
Activated sludge	5-6
Trickling filter	8-10
Primary and activated combined	6-10
Primary and trickling filter combined	10-12

Surface loading rates of 400 gallons per day per square foot (gpd/sq ft) or less will normally result in septic conditions. To prevent septic conditions, surface overflow rates should be maintained between 500 and 800 gpd/sq ft. For very thin mixtures or WAS only, hydraulic loading rates of 100-200 gpd/sq ft are appropriate. An oxygen-rich water source, such as secondary effluent, shall be available as a supplemental flow to the thickener to achieve the necessary overflow rates.

The diameter of a gravity thickener should not exceed 80 feet.

12.3.2.5 Bottom Slope

Bottom slopes shall be sufficient to keep the sludge moving toward the center well with the aid of a rake. Generally, the slope should be greater than conventional clarifiers. A floor slope of 2-3 inches per foot is recommended.

12.3.3 Flotation Thickeners

Flotation thickeners are normally used to concentrate waste activated sludge.

12.3.3.1 Air-Charged Water

The thickener underflow is generally used as a source of water for the air-charging units, although primary tank effluent or plant effluent may also be used.

12.3.3.2 Design Sizing

The engineer shall provide the design basis for sizing the units and for the support calculation. Design sizing should be based on rational calculations, including: total pounds of waste sludge anticipated, design solids and hydraulic loading of the unit, operating cycle in hours per day per week, removal efficiency, and quantity and type of chemical aids required. Flotation thickeners are normally sized by solids surface loadings.

Typical design loadings range from 1.0 to 2.5 pounds per hour per square foot. (See Table 12-3, for typical solids loading rates to produce a minimum 4% solids concentration.)

12.3.3.3 Hydraulic Loading Rates

If polymers are used, hydraulic loading rates of 2.5 gpm/sq ft or less should be used. The hydraulic loading rates shall be lower if polymers are not used. Hydraulic loading rates shall be based on the total flow (influent plus recycle). The design of any thickened sludge pump from DAF units should be conservative. Frequently, polymer conditioned sludge will result in a solids concentration greater than 4%. Pumps shall be capable of handling a sludge of at least 5% thickness.

TABLE 12-3

TYPICAL DAF THICKENER SOLIDS LOADING RATES NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A MINIMUM 4 PERCENT SOLIDS CONCENTRATION

	Solids loading rate, lb/sq ft/hr	
Type of sludge	No chemical addition	Optimum chemical addition
Primary only	0.83 - 1.25	up to 2.5
Waste activated		
sludge (WAS)		
Air	0.42	up to 2.0
Oxygen	0.6 - 0.8	up to 2.2
Trickling filter	0.6 - 0.8	up to 2.0
Primary + WAS (air)	0.6 - 1.25	up to 2.0
Primary + trickling		
filter	0.83 - 1.25	up to 2.5

12.3.4 Centrifugal Thickeners

12.3.4.1 Pretreatment

Any pretreatment required is in addition of that required for the main wastewater stream. For example, separate and independent grit removal may be needed for the centrifuge feed stream.

Disc nozzle centrifuges require pretreatment of the feed stream. Both screening and grit removal are required to reduce operation and maintenance requirements. Approximately 11% of the feed stream will be rejected in pretreatment, consideration should be given to the treatment of this flow. It is usually routed to the primary clarifier.

Basket centrifuges do not require pretreatment and are recommended in small plants (1.0-2.0 MGD) without primary clarification and grit removal.

Solid bowl decanter centrifuges require grit removal in the feed stream and are a potentially high maintenance item.

12.3.4.2 Chemical Coagulants

Provisions for the addition of coagulants to the sludge should be considered for improving dewatering and solids capture.

12.3.4.3 Design Data

The engineer shall provide the design basis for loading rates and support calculations. Both hydraulic and solids loading rate limitations should be addressed.

12.3.5 Other Thickeners

Other thickner designs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Pilot plant data shall be provided by the design engineer upon request.

12.4 Conditioning

12.4.1 General

Pretreatment of the sludge by chemical or thermal conditioning should be investigated to improve the thickening, dewatering, and/or stabilization characteristics of the sludge.

The effects of conditioning on downstream processes and subsequent side-stream treatment should be evaluated. Thermal conditioning will concentrate the BOD level of the side stream. Its treatment must be considered in calculating organic loadings of other units.

12.4.2 Chemical

Type of chemical, location of injection, and method of mixing should be carefully considered to ensure obtaining anticipated results. Pilot testing is often necessary to determine the best conditioning system for a given sludge.

12.5 Digestion

12.5.1 Anaerobic Digestion

12.5.1.1 General

a. Operability

Anaerobic digestion is a feasible stabilizing method for wastewater sludges that have low concentrations of toxins and a volatile solids content above 50%. It should not be used where wide variations in sludge quantity and quality are common. Anaerobic digestion is a complex process requiring close operator control. The process is very susceptible to upsets as the microorganisms involved are extremely sensitive to changes of their environment. Frequent monitoring of the following parameters is required:

(i) pH (6.4 - 7.5 recommended)

(ii) volatile acids/alkalinity ratio (always 0.5 or greater)

(iii) toxics (volatile acids, heavy metals, light metal cations, oxygen, sulfides, and ammonia)

(iv) temperature (within 1° F of design temperature)

(v) recycle streams (BOD, SS, NH_3, phenols)

The importance of avoiding digester upsets cannot be overlooked. The methane-producer bacteria have a very slow growth rate and it will take two weeks or more to resume normal digester performance.

b. Multiple Units

Multiple units should be provided. Staged digestion design may be used, provided the units can be used in parallel as well as in series. Where multiple units are not provided, a lagoon or storage tanks should be provided for emergency use so that digestion tanks may be taken out of service without unduly interrupting plant operation. Means of returning sludge from the secondary digester unit to the primary digester should be provided. In large treatment plants where digesters are provided, separate digestion of primary sludges should be considered.

c. Depth

The proportion of depth to diameter should provide for the formation of a supernatant liquor with a minimum depth of 6 feet. Sidewall depth is generally about one-half the diameter of the digester for diameters up to 60 feet, and decreases to about one-third the diameter for diameters approaching 100 feet.

d. Maintenance Provisions

To facilitate emptying, cleaning, and maintenance, the following features are required:

(i) Slope

The tank bottom shall slope to drain toward the withdrawal pipe. A slope of between 1 inch per foot and 3 inches per foot is recommended.

(ii) Access Manholes

At least two access manholes should be provided in the top of the tank, in addition to the gas dome. One opening should be large enough to permit the insertion of mechanical equipment to remove scum, grit, and sand. A separate side wall manhole should be provided at ground level.

(iii) Safety

Nonsparking tools, rubber-soled shoes, safety harness, gas detectors for flammable and toxic gasses and the hose type or self-contained type breathing apparatus shall be provided.

e. Pre-thickening of sludge may be advantageous, but the solids content shall be less than 8% to ease mixing problems.

12.5.1.2 Sludge Inlets and Outlets

Multiple sludge inlets and draw-offs and multiple recirculation suction and discharge points should be provided to facilitate flexible operation and effective mixing of the digester contents, unless adequate mixing facilities are provided within the digester. One inlet should discharge above the liquid level and be located at approximately the center of the tank to assist in scum breakup. Raw sludge inlet points should be located to minimize short-circuiting to the supernatant drawoff.

12.5.1.3 Tank Capacity

a. General

Two cultures of bacteria are primarily involved in anaerobic digestion: acid formers and methane formers. Capacity of the digester tank shall be based on the growth rate of the methane-formers, as they have extremely slow growth rates.

b. Solids Basis

Where the composition of the sewage has been established, tank capacity should be computed from the volume and character of sludge to be digested. The total digestion tank capacity should be determined by rational calculations based upon factors such as volume of sludge added, its percent solids and character, volatile solids loading, temperature to be maintained in the digesters, and the degree or extent of mixing to be obtained. These detailed calculations shall be submitted to justify the basis of design.

Where composition of the sewage has not been established, the minimum combined digestion tank capacity outlined below shall be provided. Such requirements assume that the raw sludge is derived from ordinary domestic wastewater, a digestion temperature is maintained in the range of 85° to 100° F, there is 40 to 50 percent volatile matter in the digested sludge, and that the digested sludge will be removed frequently from the process.

(i) Completely Mixed Systems

For heated digestion systems providing for intimate and effective mixing of the digester designed for a constant feed loading rate of 150 to 400 pounds 1,000 cubic feet of volume per day in the active digesting unit. The design average detention time in completely mixed systems shall have sufficient mixing capacity to provide for complete digester turnover every 30 minutes.

(ii) Moderately Mixed Systems

For digestion systems where mixing is accomplished only by circulating external
heat exchanger, the system may be loaded up to 40 pounds of volatile solids per 1,000 cubic feet of volume per day in the active digestion units. This loading may be modified upward or downward, depending upon the degree of mixing provided. Where mixing is accomplished by other methods, loading rates will be determined on the basis of information furnished by the design engineer.

c. Population Basis

Where solids data are not available, the following unit capacities shown in Table 12-4 for conventional, heated tanks shall be used for plants treating domestic sewage.
The capacities should be increased by allowing for the suspended solids population equivalent of any industrial wastes in the sewage. The capacities stated apply where digested sludge is dewatered on sand drying beds and may be reduced if the sludge is dewatered mechanically or otherwise frequently withdrawn.

Table 12-4
Cubic Feet Per Capita

Type of Plant	Moderately Mixed Systems	Completely Mixed Systems
Primary	2 to 3	1.3
Primary and Trickling Filter	4 to 5	2.7 to 3.3
Primary and Activated Sludge	4 to 6	2.7 to 4

For small installations (population 5,000 or less) the larger values should be used.

12.5.1.4 Gas Collection System

a. General

All portions of the gas system, including the space above the tank liquor, storage facilities, and piping shall be so designed that under all normal operating conditions, including sludge withdrawal, the gas will be maintained under positive pressure. All enclosed areas where any gas leakage might occur shall be adequately ventilated.

b. Safety Equipment

All necessary safety facilities shall be included where gas is produced. Pressure and vacuum relief valves and flame traps, together with automatic safety shutoff valves, are essential. Water-seal equipment shall not be installed on gas piping.

c. Gas Piping and Condensate

Gas piping shall be of adequate diameter and shall slope to condensation traps at low points.
The use of float-controlled condensate traps is not permitted. Condensation traps shall be placed in accessible locations for daily servicing and draining. Cast iron, ductile iron, and/or stainless steel piping should be used.

d. Electrical Fixtures and Equipment

Electrical fixtures and equipment in enclosed places where gas may accumulate shall comply with the National Board of Fire Underwriters' specifications for hazardous conditions. Explosion-proof electrical equipment shall be provided in sludge-digestion tank galleries containing digested sludge piping or gas piping and shall be provided in any other hazardous location where gas or digested sludge leakage is possible.

e. Waste Gas

Waste gas burners shall be readily accessible and should be located at least 50 feet away from any plant structure, if placed near ground level, or may be located on the roof of the control building if sufficiently removed from the tank. Waste gas burners shall not be located on top of the digester. The waste gas burner should be sized and designed to ensure complete combustion to eliminate odors.

f. Ventilation and Cover

Any underground enclosures connecting with digestion tanks or containing sludge or gas piping or equipment shall be provided with forced ventilation. Tightly fitting, self-closing doors shall be provided at connecting passageways and tunnels to minimize the spread of gas. A floating cover should be provided instead of a fixed cover for increased operational flexibility and safety.

g. Metering

Gas meters with bypasses should be provided to meter total gas production and utilization.

h. Pressure Indication

Gas piping lines for anaerobic digesters should be equipped with closed-type pressure indicating gauges. These gauges should read directly in inches of water. Normally, three gauges should be provided, one to measure the main line pressure, a second to measure the pressure upstream of gas-utilization equipment, and the third to measure pressure to wasteburners.
Gas-tight shutoff and vent cocks shall be provided. The vent piping shall be extended outside the building, and the opening shall be screened to prevent entrance by insects and turned downward to prevent entrance of rainwater. All piping shall be protected with safety equipment.

i. Gas Utilization Equipment

Gas-burning boilers, engines, and other gas utilization equipment should be located at or above ground level in well-ventilated rooms. Gas lines to these units shall be provided with suitable flame traps.

12.5.1.5 Heating

a. Insulation

Digestion tanks should be constructed above the water table and should be suitably insulated to minimize heat loss.

b. Heating Facilities

Sludge may be heated by circulating the sludge through external heaters or by units located inside the digestion tank.

(i) External Heating

Piping should be designed to provide for the preheating of feed sludge before introduction to the digesters. Provisions should be made in the layout of the piping and valving to facilitate cleaning of these lines.

Heat exchanger sludge piping should be sized for heat transfer requirements.

(ii) Internal Coils

Hot water coils for heating digestion tanks should be at least 2 inches in diameter and the coils, support brackets, and all fastenings should be of corrosion-resistant material. The use of dissimilar metals should be avoided to minimize galvanic action. The high point in the coils should be vented to avoid air lock.

(iii) Other Methods

Other types of heating facilities will be considered on their own merits.

c. Heating Capacity

Sufficient heating capacity shall be provided to consistently maintain the digesting sludge temperature to within 1°F (0.6°C) of the design temperature. An alternate source of fuel should be available and the boiler or other heat source should be capable of using the alternate fuel if digester gas is the primary fuel. Thermal shocks shall be avoided. Sludge storage may be required to accomplish this.

d. Hot Water Internal Heating Controls

(i) Mixing Valves

A suitable automatic mixing valve should be provided to temper the boiler water with return water so that the inlet water to the heat jacket or coils can be held to below a temperature (130° to 150°F) at which sludge caking will be accentuated. Manual control should also be provided by suitable bypass valves.

(ii) Boiler Controls

The boiler should be provided with suitable automatic controls to maintain the boiler temperature at approximately 180°F to minimize corrosion and to shut off the main fuel supply in the event of pilot burner or electrical failure, low boiler water level, or excessive temperature.

(iii) Thermometers

Thermometers shall be provided to show temperatures of the sludge, hot water feed, hot water return, and boiler water.

12.5.1.6 Mixing

Facilities for mixing the digester contents shall be provided where required for proper digestion by reason of loading rates, or other features of the system.

12.5.1.7 Supernatant Withdrawal

a. Piping Size

Supernatant piping should not be less than 6 inches in diameter, although 4-inch lines will be considered in special cases.

b. Withdrawal Arrangements

(i) Withdrawal Levels

Piping should be arranged so that withdrawal can be made from three or more levels in the tank. A positive unvalved vented overflow shall be provided.

(ii) Withdrawal Selection

On fixed-cover tanks the supernatant withdrawal level should preferably be selected by means of interchangeable extensions at the discharge end of the piping.

(iii) Supernatant Selector

If a moveable supernatant selector is provided, provision should be made for at least one other draw-off level located in the supernatant zone of the tank in addition to the unvalved emergency supernatant draw-off pipe. High-pressure backwash facilities should be provided.

(iv) Sampling

Provisions shall be made for sampling at each supernatant draw-off level. Sampling pipes should be at least 1-1/2 inches in diameter.

(v) Supernatant Handling

Problems such as shock organic loads, pH, and high ammonia levels associated with digester supernatant shall be addressed in the plant design. Recycle streams should be bled continuously back to the treatment process.

12.5.2 Aerobic Sludge Digestion

12.5.2.1 Mixing and Aeration

Aerobic sludge digestion tanks shall be designed for effective mixing and aeration. Minimum mixing requirements of 20 cubic feet per minute per 1,000 cubic feet for air systems and 0.5 horsepower per 1,000 cubic feet for mechanical systems are recommended. Aeration requirements may be more or less than the mixing requirements, depending on system design and actual solids loading. Approximately 2.0 pounds of oxygen per pound volatile solids are needed for aeration.

If diffusers are used, types should be provided to minimize clogging and designed to permit removal for inspection, maintenance, and replacement without dewatering the tanks, if only one digester is proposed.

12.5.2.2 Size and Number of Tanks

The size and number of aerobic sludge digestion tank or tanks should be determined by rational calculations based upon such factors as volume of sludge added, its percent solids and character, the degree of volatile solids reduction required and the size of installation with appropriate allowance for sludge and supernatant storage.

Generally, 40 to 50 percent volatile solids destruction is obtained during aerobic digestion. To ensure a stabilized sludge which will not emit odors, the volatile solids content should be less than 60 percent in the digested sludge. Calculations shall be submitted upon request to justify the basis of design. The following design parameter ranges should be considered the minimum in designing aerobic digestion facilities.

a. Hydraulic Detention Time

Hydraulic detention time at 20°C should be in the range of 15 to 25 days, depending upon the type of sludge being digested. Activated sludge alone requires the lower detention time and a combination of primary plus activated or trickling filter sludges requires the high detention time. Detention times should be adjusted for operating temperatures other than 20°C.

b. Volatile Solids

The volatile solids loading shall be in the range of 0.1 to 0.2 pound of volatile solids per cubic foot per day.

c. Dissolved Oxygen

Design dissolved oxygen concentration should be in the range of 1 to 2 mg/l. A minumum of 1.0 mg/l shall be maintained at all times.

d. Mixing Energy

Energy input requirements for mixing should be in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 horsepower per 1,000 cubic feet where mechanical aerators are used; 20 to 35 standard cubic feet of air per minute per 1,000 cubic feet of aeration tank where diffused air mixing is used on activated sludge alone; and greater than 60 cubic feet per minute per 1,000 cubic feet for primary sludge alone and primary plus activated sludge.

e. Storage

Detention time should be increased for temperatures below 20°C. If sludge cannot be withdrawn during certain periods, additional storage capacity should be provided. Plants smaller than 75,000 gpd should have storage capacity of 2 cubic foot per population equivalent served.

12.5.2.3 Supernatant Separation

Facilities should be provided for separation or decantation of supernatant. Provisions for sidestream treatment of supernatant should be considered.

12.6 Composting

Composting operations will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that the basis for design and a cost-effective analysis are submitted by the engineer.

12.7 Sludge Dewatering

12.7.1 General

Drainage from drying beds and centrate or filtrate from dewatering units should be returned to the sewage treatment process at appropriate points preceding the secondary process. The return flows shall be returned downstream of the influent sample and/or flow measuring point and a means shall be provided to sample return flows. These organic loads must be considered in plant design.

12.7.2 Sludge Drying Beds

12.7.2.1 Area

It is recommended that wastewater systems have a hybrid sludge disposal method because of the seasonal downtime associated with drying beds. The amount of rainfall
normal for our state makes the use of sludge drying beds insufficient at times.

Consideration shall be given to the location of drying beds to avoid areas where moisture in the air is higher than normal (i.e., adjacent to rivers where morning fog is common).

In determining the area for sludge drying beds, consideration shall be given to climatic conditions, the character and volume of the sludge to be dewatered, type of bed used, and methods of ultimate sludge disposal. Design calculations shall be submitted upon request to substantiate the area used.

Drying bed design should be based on square feet per capita or pounds of sludge solids per square foot per year.
Table 12-5 presents the range of values that should be used, these values are for drying anaerobically digested sludges. Additional area is required for wetter sludges such as those resulting from aerobic digestion; therefore, use the higher number of the required range.

Table 12-5 DRYING BED DESIGN CRITERIA*

	Open Beds	Covered Beds	
Type of Sludge	Per Capita (sq ft/capita)	Solids (lb/sq ft/yr)	Per Capita (sq ft/capita)
Primary	1.0 to 1.5	27.5	0.75 to 1.0
Attached Growth	1.25 to 1.75	22.0	1.0 to 1.25
Suspended Growth	2.50	15.0	2.00

*The design engineer should rely on his experience and the plant location.

These criteria are a minimum.

12.7.2.2. Percolation Type

a. Gravel

The lower course of gravel around the underdrains should be properly graded to range in size from 1/4-inch to 1-inch and should be 12 inches in depth, extending at least 6 inches above the top of the underdrains. It is desirable to place this in 2 or more layers. The top layer of at least 3 inches should consist of gravel 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch in size. The gravel shall be laid on an inpervious surface so that the filtrate will not escape to the soil.

b. Sand

The top course shall consist of at least nine inches of sand with a uniformity coefficient of less than 3.5. For trickling filter sludge, the effective size of the sand shall be between 0.8 to 3.0 millimeter. For waste activated sludge, the effective size of the sand shall be between 0.5 to 0.8 millimeter. For combinations, use the lower size range.

c. Underdrains

Underdrains should be clay pipe, concrete drain tile, or other underdrain acceptable material and shall be at least 4 inches in diameter and sloped not less than 1 percent to drain. Underdrains shall be spaced between 8 and 20 feet apart. The bottom of the bed shall slope towards the underdrains. Consideration should be given to placing the underdrain in a trench.

12.7.2.3 Impervious Types

Paved surface beds may be used if supporting data to justify such usage are acceptable to the Department. The use of paved beds for aerobically digested sludge is generally not recommended.

12.7.2.4 Walls

Walls should be watertight and extend 15 to 18 inches above the ground surface. Outer walls should be curbed to prevent soil from washing onto the beds.

12.7.2.5 Sludge Removal

Not less than two beds should be provided and they should be arranged to facilitate sludge removal. Concrete truck tracks should be provided for all percolation-type sludge beds with pairs of tracks for the beds on appropriate centers. If truck access is by way of an opening in the drying bed wall, the opening shall be designed so that no sludge will leak out during the filling process.

12.7.2.6 Sludge Influent

The sludge pipe to the beds should terminate at least 12 inches above the surface and be arranged so that it will drain. Concrete splash plates shall be provided at sludge discharge points.

12.7.3 Mechanical Dewatering

12.7.3.1 Methods and Applicability

The methods used to dewater sludge may include use of one or more of the following devices:

a. Rotary vacuum filters

b. Centrifuges, either solid bowl or basket type

c. Filter presses

d. Horizontal belt filters

e. Rotating gravity concentrators

f. Vacuum drying beds

g. Other "media type" drying beds

The technology and design of sludge dewatering devices are constantly under development; therefore, each type should be given careful consideration.
The applicability of a given method should be determined on a case-by-case basis, with the specifics of any given situation being carefully evaluated, preferably in pilot tests. The engineer shall justify the method selected using pilot plant data or experience at a similar treatment plant.

12.7.3.2 Considerations

Considerations in selection should include:

a. Type and amount of sludge

b. Variations in flow rate and solids concentration

c. Capacity of the equipment

d. Chemicals required for conditioning

e. Degree of dewatering required for disposal

f. Experience and qualifications of plant staff

g. Reliability

h. Operation and maintenance cost

i. Space requirements

12.7.3.3 Storage

Adequate storage shall be provided for all systems.

12.8 Sludge Storage Lagoons

Refer to Chapter 9, Ponds and Aerated Lagoons, for the requirements of sludge storage lagoons.

12.9 Sludge Disposal

The ultimate disposal of sludge through various methods (i.e., landfilling, land application) is subject to the regulations and/or guidelines of the Tennessee Division of Water Pollution Control (DWPC). Approval by DWPC is required prior to initiation of the selected disposal alternative.