

## ONSITE REGULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

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### *ABSTRACT*

Recent US onsite system statistics are discussed, showing the decline since the mid-1990s of the percent of occupied housing served by unsewered wastewater systems. An attempt is subsequently made to describe the complexity of the US regulatory system which includes the limitations of the federal government and the dominance of state and local governments regarding onsite system regulation. The development of state codes and their adoption by local governments for implementation through ordinances is also described. The content of a typical prescriptive code is described, and the variability of enacted requirements by different states is noted, resulting in confusion on the part of all stakeholders in each state as to what the stated numbers in each of these codes can mean in terms of performance. The federal push for the last 15 years has been to convert these prescriptive codes into performance codes, but the federal statutes limit that role to one of facilitation to only those states that wish to upgrade their rules, through informative publications and websites. In the present economic condition, few states are making such endeavors a serious priority.