

Prineville porta-potti business appeals DEQ fines

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

PRINEVILLE, Ore. -- The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued a \$28,752 penalty in late February to Wade Dale Ditmore of Prineville, doing business in Central Oregon using two business names (Little John's Portable Toilet Service and Overland Pumping) for performing sewage disposal services for 10 years without obtaining the required onsite sewage disposal service provider's license from DEQ. Ditmore recently filed an appeal within the 20 days allowed by DEQ to do so.

Following is the content of the original DEQ findings:

On numerous occasions between July 1, 1997 and May 14, 2007 Ditmore pumped sewage and disposed of it at the Wastewater Control Plant in Bend and the Crook County Landfill in Prineville, as well as other locations in Central Oregon.

In March 2007, Ditmore spoke with DEQ staff concerning a citizen complaint that he was discharging sewage to the ground surface from the pumper truck he uses to haul septage. In discussing the matter, Ditmore assured DEQ that he was licensed to perform sewage disposal services in Oregon. DEQ determined, though, that neither of his companies had a license to perform onsite sewage disposal services in Oregon.

Further investigation revealed that Ditmore submitted an onsite sewage disposal license application to DEQ in 1997 for Little John's Portable Toilet Service. The application was incomplete as it did not include the appropriate license fee, required surety bond, septage management plan worksheet, vehicle inspection forms, annual septage inventory or the required site authorization letters to land apply septage from treatment facility operators. DEQ informed Ditmore of these deficiencies in writing, but he did not complete the application or obtain a license.

Ditmore also placed advertisements in the 2005 and 2006 Dex Media Inc. phone books for Central Oregon stating that Little John's performs sewage disposal services, and in the 2007 edition, he placed an advertisement stating that Little John's and Overland Plumbing had combined businesses to offer sewage disposal services.

State law requires persons conducting sewage disposal services to be licensed, properly bonded and knowledgeable about proper installation of septic systems in order to ensure protection of public health and the environment. Unlicensed operators do not provide such assurances. By not providing this assurance, unlicensed providers may gain economic advantage over competitors by avoiding the licensing and bonding fees.

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