

# Look for the ICC-ES PMG Listing Mark on Septic Tanks

by Bernie Soesilo, ICC Evaluation Service Director of Listing Programs

The *International Residential Code* (IRC) defines a septic tank as:

*a water-tight receptor that receives the discharge of a building sanitary drainage system and is constructed so as to separate solids from the liquid, digest organic matter through a period of detention, and allow the liquids to discharge into the soil outside of the tank through a system of open joint or perforated piping or a seepage pit.*

How can you be certain that septic tanks installed in your jurisdiction perform their job as defined by the IRC? The answer is, in most cases, you can't—unless they have an ICC Evaluation Service (ICC-ES) plumbing, mechanical and fuel gas (PMG) listing mark.

Studies have shown that septic tank effluent quality varies significantly with the compositions of domestic wastewater. A quality septic tank is one that has enough detention periods to digest organic matter—such as Biochemical Oxygen Demand and Chemical Oxygen Demand—and can separate solids (such as suspended solids) from liquids.

ICC-ES ensures that the effluent from a quality septic tank, through a system of open joint or perforated

piping or a seepage pit, are safe enough to be discharged into the soil. An ongoing inspection at the manufacturing facility is required to ensure that the listed septic tank continuously meets the listing requirements.

ICC-ES operates in accordance with International Organization for Standardization (ISO)/International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Guide 65, *General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems*, and uses laboratories that are in compliance with ISO/IEC Guide 17025, *General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories*.

Available to code officials as your “private engineers’ group,” ICC-ES is here to make your job in the field easier and we are committed to public safety. Our competent staff comprises civil, structural and mechanical engineers who ensure that septic tanks perform properly. Only septic tanks that have undergone rigorous testing and review bear our mark—a well-known mark that has become synonymous with integrity—which has been trusted by code officials for over 70 years. In short, you can be sure, that an ICC-ES listing mark provides exceptional credibility when placed on a septic tank. ♦

The PMG Resource Center can be reached toll-free at 1-888-ICCSAFE (422-7233), extension 4PMG (4764), or via e-mail at [PMGResourceCenter@iccsafe.org](mailto:PMGResourceCenter@iccsafe.org).

## Inside ICC's Plumbing, Mechanical and Fuel Gas Group

*As part of its renewed commitment to plumbing, mechanical and fuel gas programs, ICC has consolidated all of its PMG activities into a single cohesive unit. Following are brief introductions to some of the key members of this distinguished group.*

**MICHAEL JONES**, Senior Evaluation Specialist for ICC-Evaluation Service, has worked in all phases of construction from concrete to roofing, has been a plumbing contractor since 1981, and is a certified building and plumbing inspector. His expertise also includes plan checking and the evaluation of alternative products for plumbing, mechanical and fuel gas products as well as more than fifteen years of



experience with the International Accreditation Service inspecting laboratories and quality control agencies.

**FRED GRABLE, P.E.**, ICC Staff Engineer, is a master plumber and registered Professional Engineer in two states. His professional experience includes nearly two decades as an engineer for an industrial pressure piping manufacturer and in wastewater treatment equipment field services. He also founded his own plumbing company, for which he managed new construction, remodeling and repair of residential and commercial plumbing and gas systems. ♦



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