

**LOWER COLORADO RIVER AUTHORITY**

**PUMP AND ALARM PREPARATION AND INSPECTION**

LCRA requires testing of pumps and alarms during routine inspections. If the pump tank does not have an alarm, one must be added prior to scheduling the inspection. It is recommended that the alarm be tested prior to scheduling the inspection. If the owner or owner’s representative is unfamiliar with operation of the system, it is recommended that a licensed installer be contacted to test the system. If proper operation of the pump and alarm cannot be verified during LCRA’s inspection, arrangements must be made to ensure proper operation of the system and to contact LCRA for reinspection. A pre-paid reinspection fee may be required.

**Pump tank alarm preparation and inspection consists of one of the following options:**

**Option One (pump tank is not uncovered):**

The septic pump and alarm must be on separate breakers. Turn off the pump motor circuit breaker. Run water from within the home or business (bathtubs work well) until the pump tank alarm is activated. The alarm may be an audio alarm (horn or buzzer), visual alarm (a light) or both. Some older systems may have a small diameter, vertical PVC pipe with a float mechanism at the bottom, within the tank. The float will cause the pipe to rise above the ground signaling a problem with the pump.

As soon as the alarm is activated, turn the water off. Leave the pump motor circuit breaker off until the inspector arrives. If the alarm does not activate, the alarm should be repaired or replaced by a licensed installer. It will be necessary for the owner or the owner’s representative to be present to activate and de-activate the breakers.

The owner or the owner’s representative will activate the pump in the presence of the inspector. The inspector will know whether the pump is working by the fact that after a short period of pumping, the alarm will turn off due to the water level being lowered in the pump tank. The time needed for filling the pump tank to the alarm activation level will vary with each tank, depending on tank size and rate of inflow.

**Option Two (pump tank access port is removed):**

For this option, the access port of the pump tank must be uncovered and removable. It will be necessary for the owner or the owner’s representative to be present to activate the alarm float and pump float within the pump tank, in the inspector’s presence. The floats are activated by lifting with an implement such as a garden hoe. Lifting the pump float to the “on” position will activate the pump, which will make a noticeable sound while running. Lifting the alarm float to the “on” position should sound the alarm, or the alarm light should come on, or both, depending on the alarm type.

**Testing of electronic monitoring and automatic notification (EMAN) alarms:**

Surface irrigation systems and some drip irrigation and low pressure dose systems are required to have EMAN alarms. To test an EMAN system, it must be activated at the site by the maintenance company representative who will trip a breaker relative to the system, such as a pump breaker, while in the presence of the LCRA inspector. The company receiving the alarm signal must call the LCRA office at (512) 578-3216, or toll-free at 1-800-776-5272, ext. 3216, or email the notice to [OSSF@lcra.org](mailto:OSSF@lcra.org). Our office must receive the call or email from the maintenance company within 24 hours of having received the alarm signal.