



Technical Guidance

Field drainage systems to septic tanks and small private sewage treatment plants

Question

Are coiled flexible internally ribbed plastic land drains suitable for use in the field drainage from a septic tank or a small private sewage treatment plant?

Considerations

- NHBC Standards chapter 5.3 – D8(e) refers to field drains for the disposal of the discharge from septic tanks.
- Small solid particles in the discharge from septic tanks and treatment plants can over time accumulate on ribbed pipe surfaces and cause blockages.
- Pipes should be laid to a uniform gradient. Dips in flexible pipes can cause settlement of solid particles and potential blockages.
- Manufacturers of septic tanks and small treatment plants do not recommend the use of flexible plastic land drains to form the drainage field from their units.

Answer

The field drain from a septic tank or small private sewage treatment plant should be formed with rigid perforated pipes (rigid plastic or clay) having a smooth inner surface. Pipes should be laid to uniform falls.

Coiled ribbed plastic land drains are not suitable for this purpose.