

Jefferson County Environmental Public Health

617 Sheridan St. Port Townsend, WA 98368

360-385-9444

Septic Permit Application Instructions for New Septic Systems

1. **Contact a licensed septic designer and request a site evaluation.** The designer will assist you in choosing the most appropriate location for the septic tank and drainfield. A minimum of four (4) soil test pits must be dug. The holes should be 50' apart. Two holes should be in the area of the proposed drainfield and two holes in the proposed reserve drainfield. The designer will do a soil evaluation and draw up a sewage disposal system design. All test pits must be protected from accidental entry.

Septic Designers are licensed by the State Department of Licensing. You can find a septic system designer on our website under Licensed/Certified Septic System Professionals.

2. Complete all sections of the sewage disposal application, you may need assistance from your designer. Provide explicit and clear directions to the site and test pits on large properties. The OWNER of the property must sign the application, submit the original.

3. If soils appear clay-like, extremely hard or wet, it may be necessary to dig more soil test holes to find the best soils on the site. Additional review of the site through the Wet Season, January thru March, may be required, see JCHHS Policy#93-04 for additional information.

4. Once the completed application, fee, and proposed design have been submitted, an environmental health specialist will visit the site. The purpose of this visit is to verify that the proposed design is appropriate and meets all State and County codes. Should revisions or additional information be required the environmental health specialist will contact the designer directly.

5. To avoid possible liability to yourself, the holes should be filled after the inspection by county staff. You will receive a letter informing you that county staff have completed a site visit.

6. Septic applications are routed to other agencies to be reviewed for compliance with their regulations. Additional fees may be charged by these agencies for their review. Additional reports may also be required. After review for environmentally sensitive areas and other applicable regulations, review of the septic system design and receipt of any required additional information; the sewage disposal permit will be issued. The permit is valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issuance, repair permits are valid for 90 days.

BASIC SEPTIC DESIGN REQUIREMENTS:

- Locate drainfield & reserve area no closer than 100 feet from any private well.
- Locate drainfield & reserve area no closer than 100 feet from surface waters.
- Locate drainfield & reserve area no closer than 50 feet from any cuts/banks/bluffs.
- Do not site drainfield or reserve area in areas of known high seasonal groundwater.
- Locate drainfield & reserve area no closer than 5 feet from property lines and no closer than 10 feet from house foundation, 30 feet if home location is down slope.

- Prior to construction of the sewage disposal system, please have your installer contact your septic designer and the Health Department well in advance.
- Drain Field is not approved for use until the health department “finals” the permit.

Additional setback requirements can be found in Washington State Code 246-272A, Onsite Sewage Systems. You can find it at the Department of Health Website (doh.wa.gov under publications) or at Jefferson County Environmental Public Health, 617 Sheridan St Port Townsend.

7. Performance monitoring is required for all onsite sewage systems. This requirement can be met by either hiring a private contractor certified to perform O&M, or a licensed septic designer to submit the necessary reports. Homeowners may be eligible to complete some of the required inspections, see our website under “Monitoring / Inspection O&M.” O&M inspection frequency is required to be current for any existing septic system on a property where permitting is proposed or for a real estate transaction.
8. An Operation and Monitoring Agreement shall be recorded to the property title, a copy of the recorded document is required with the application.

See Jefferson County Code 8.15 Table 1 for the monitoring frequency required on your site. At a minimum Gravity Systems require monitoring every 3 years all others require annual monitoring.

NOTE: Any removal of or major disturbance of soil in the proposed or approved drainfield area may create site conditions that are unacceptable for the installation of a sewage disposal system.