

On-Site Sewage System Application Process

The design, installation and use of an On-Site Sewage System (Septic System) in Pierce County must meet requirements of the Washington State Board of Health and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. The professionals you hire are responsible for keeping you informed of the progress of your application.

Design/Plan Preparation

- ❑ You must hire a Washington State licensed Designer or Professional Engineer to do the work required for your project. A list is available on the following websites:

Health Department website www.tpchd.org/septic (limited)

Department of Licensing website www.dol.wa.gov/business/checkstatus.html

- ❑ Your designer/engineer will come to your property to evaluate the site and then put together a septic system proposal.

Designer/engineer prepares a plan and submits an application

- ❑ Your designer/engineer will prepare and submit a complete application package and pay the appropriate Health Department fees. Incomplete applications will be subject to a resubmittal fee.
- ❑ The submitted application with plan/design will remain active for three years from the date received by the Health Department.

Application Review

- ❑ The Health Department's goal is to provide review and response to complete applications within 30 calendar days.
- ❑ Staff from the Health Department will conduct a site inspection and review your submittal to ensure that the proposal is in compliance with state and local codes.
- ❑ Notification of approval or request for additional information will be sent to your designer/engineer. Additional submittals will be subject to a resubmittal fee.

Once the Health Department has completed review and grants approval for septic and water, the installation process for the septic system can begin.

Select a Certified Installation Firm

- ❑ Notify your designer/engineer of the name of the certified installation firm contracted to install the septic system. A list of Certified Installation Firms is available online at www.tpchd.org/septic.

Installation Permit Release

- ❑ Your designer/engineer is responsible for contacting the Health Department for release of an installation permit, which can only be provided to a certified firm. An installation permit fee will apply. The property owner may pre-pay this fee if desired.
- ❑ When the installation permit fee is paid, the permit and a copy of your approved design are released to your installation firm and the permit is to be posted at your building site. The septic system is to be installed according to the approved design.

Final Inspection Requirements

- ❑ Upon system completion, the installer will notify the designer/engineer.
- ❑ The designer/engineer will inspect the system to determine compliance with the approved design and sign the permit to indicate the system has been properly installed. The designer/engineer will then notify the Health Department that the septic system is ready for final inspection.
- ❑ The Health Department will have three working days to inspect the system prior to final cover.
To avoid additional inspection fees, please coordinate with your designer/engineer.

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- ❑ Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will notify the installer and designer/engineer of any deficiency noted during the final inspection that require correction. Any corrections must be made before the Health Department will approve the final installation.

Placement of Cover Material/Final Grading

- ❑ The placement of cover material/final grading over the septic system must be performed by a certified Installer or under his or her direct supervision.

Record Drawing Submittal

- ❑ Once the system has passed final approval and was tested for use, your designer/engineer submits a complete “record drawing” application, which indicates the specific components of the septic system and where it was installed on the property. This must be done before the current application expires.
- ❑ The Health Department’s goal is to review record drawings within ten business days. You and your designer/engineer will be notified of the outcome. Incomplete submittal or “record drawing” deficiencies will require resubmittal fees.

Final Acceptance and Permitted Use of the Septic System

- ❑ The septic system is not approved for use until the “record drawing” has been accepted.
- ❑ The continued use of the system must comply with all requirements of the current On-site Sewage Regulations of the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health and the Washington State Board of Health.
- ❑ The application and designs are stamped “Accepted Record Drawing” and copies are sent to the designer/engineer and installer. The file is then digitized for permanent record.

Building Permit Final Inspection

- ❑ Final inspection by the building department will require proof of the septic system record drawing acceptance by the Health Department. The Health Department will release hold on your Building final with Pierce County when the record drawing is accepted. If you are building under another jurisdiction, you will be required to provide proof of acceptance.

If you have questions about this process or would like additional information, please call the On-Site Septic System line at (253) 798-6470. We check and respond to messages throughout the business day.

Building Permit Application and Issuance

Please contact the appropriate Building Department official to make sure you know and understand their requirements and process.

- ❑ Once your designer/engineer has submitted your application to the Health Department, you may begin the process of obtaining a building permit from the proper agency.
- ❑ You may **apply** for your building permit by presenting a date-received, stamped copy of the septic system application and design that was submitted to the Health Department. You may purchase and pick up a copy of the submitted application and design at the Environmental Health counter on the second floor of the Health Department.
- ❑ The building department will only **issue a building permit** with proof that the septic system design and drinking water source has been approved by the Health Department. A copy of the approved application and drawing will be required at the building department.
- ❑ **Final inspection** by the building department will require proof of septic system “record drawing” acceptance by the Health Department. The “record drawing” indicates the components of the septic system and where it was installed on the property.