
A privy shall not be located within

- 15m (50 ft.) of a water source
- 15m (50 feet) of a water source, except as provided in Article 2.1.2.4 of the SOP
- 5m (17 ft.) of a property line
- 6m (20 ft.) of a dwelling, store, restaurant, or other place where food is stored, prepared or consumed

A privy equipped with a water-tight holding tank shall not be located within

- 10m (33 ft.) of a water source
- 10m (33 ft.) of a water source

Maintenance

Once the sewage treatment system is properly installed, routine maintenance and proper use will prevent most operational problems from occurring.

Because many communicable diseases are transmitted in sewage, an effective and safe private sewage system is more than just a convenience: it's a necessity. It prevents the contamination of ground water and direct contact between the sewage and people, pets and animals.

Here are some important points to remember:

- Have your septic tank checked for sludge and scum accumulations that can reduce its effectiveness. As sludge accumulates, particles that should settle out in the septic tank don't settle out and are passed to the field causing it to become plugged. You may need to have the tank pumped out annually to remove the sludge. Hire a properly equipped professional sewage hauler, and keep a record of the tank cleaning.

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- Never enter a septic tank, as poisonous gas may have accumulated. Hire a professional to do tank maintenance.
 - Do not allow vehicles or livestock on your disposal field at any time, and do not allow pathways across your disposal field. This will help prevent pipe breakage, soil compaction, and excessive freezing due to continuous compaction during winter.
 - Keep the treatment system area free of heavy growth. Cut grass and weeds short.
 - Surface water runoff shall be directed away from the sewage system.
 - If you have a water treatment system, it may affect your sewage treatment system. You should contact a Contractor or Safety Codes Officer for design assistance on this matter. Though the use of water softeners and the discharge of regeneration wastes are not specifically prohibited from discharging to an on-site wastewater treatment system, they can cause problems due to the increased sodium levels. The water from the regeneration process can overload a treatment system if the design did not consider the volume of water used in the regeneration process.
 - The sewage system is designed to accommodate a certain volume of water. Too much water can overload the system. Ensure all plumbing fixtures are maintained to prevent water leakage. Toilets, for example, can contribute up to 200 gallons a day of additional water to a system if not maintained.
 - Consider doing laundry over the week rather than establishing a laundry day. This will prevent overloading of the sewage treatment system on a single day.

Tips on Private Sewage Systems



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If your home is NOT connected to a municipal sewer system, you must have a Private Sewage System. Your private sewage system must be correctly installed and regularly maintained to ensure that it operates properly. Faulty systems create health hazards and contaminate the environment.

Effective and safe sewage treatment is a complex process. Sound decisions about the design and installation of your sewage treatment system can help avoid the inconveniences and hazards of a system failure.

Getting Started

A permit is required before an installation can begin. A “**certified contractor**” should be used to design and install the sewage treatment system. The contractor must provide you with an “**operations and maintenance manual**”.

http://municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/CP_PrivateSewageContractorList.cfm

The contractor must properly evaluate the site to determine its suitability. Part of this evaluation includes determining the soil texture (e.g. sandy loam – good; silty clay – poor), and may include a percolation test. A test pit must be dug to allow examination of the soil to determine if there is the needed depth of suitable soil required to treat the effluent. The pit can show where saturated soils occur or if there are any limiting layers below the treatment zone that would effect the movement of the effluent.

In soils that are finer textured (silt or clayey) the system must be increased in size and becomes more complicated.

Soil conditions may not be conducive to the

installation of a treatment field. A treatment mound or other type of system may be required.

Location! Location! Location!

There are required set back distances from the sewage treatment system to the various attributes of your site. This will affect the type of system your site can accommodate and its possible location.

Note: Article 2.1.2.4 of the SOP

On a property that adjoins a permanent body of water such as a lake, river, stream or creek, the effluent disposal component of a private sewage system shall be located not less than 90m (300 ft.) from the shore of the body of water. If a principal building is located between the system and the body of water, the 90m (300 ft.) may be reduced to the minimum distance requirements stated here for that type of treatment system.

Water-tight septic tanks, holding tanks, effluent tanks, and settling tanks must be no less than:

- 1m (3.25 ft.) from any property line
- 1m (3.25 ft.) from any building
- 10m (33 ft.) from any water source/course
- Settling tank: 6m (20 ft.) from a property line (when it includes pre-aeration)

Sub-surface treatment fields must be no less than:

- 1.5m (5 ft.) from any property line
 - 5m (17 ft.) from a septic tank or packaged sewage treatment plan
 - 5m (17 ft.) from a building that has a permanent foundation but does not have a basement, cellar, or crawl space
 - 1m (3.25 feet) from a building that does have a permanent foundation
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- 10m (33 ft.) from a basement, cellar or crawl space
 - 15m (50 feet) from a water source
 - 15m (50 feet) from a water source, except as provided in Article 2.1.2.4 of the SOP

Treatment mounds shall not be located within

- 15m (50 feet) from a water source
- 15m (50 feet) from a water source, except as provided in Article 2.1.2.4 of the SOP
- 3m (10 ft.) of a property line
- 3m (10 ft.) of a septic tank
- 3m (10 ft.) of a basement, cellar or crawl space
- 10m (33 ft.) of a building that does not have a basement, cellar or crawl space

Open discharge sewage systems may be installed provided the point of discharge is not less than

- 50m (165 ft.) to a water source
- 45m (150 feet) to a water source, except as provided in Article 2.1.2.4 of the SOP
- 90m (300 ft.) to a property line
- 45m (150 ft.) to a building

A lagoon serving a single family dwelling or duplex shall not be located within

- 100m (330 ft.) of a water source
- 90m (300 ft.) of a water source
- 30m (100 ft.) of a property line
- 45m (150 ft.) from a dwelling

A lagoon serving other than a single family dwelling or duplex shall not be located within: See the Alberta Private Sewage Standard of Practice 2009 (SOP).

Drip dispersal and irrigation separation distances: See SOP.
