

UNDERSTANDING THE WORKFLOW FOR INSTALLATION OF A SEPTIC SYSTEM

A PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE

The Board of Health wishes to ensure that every property owner understands the procedure, timeframes and phases for the design, approval, installation and certification of an on-site sewage disposal system (septic system). Please read this document carefully and, should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Health Department at 508-539-1426.

DESIGN/APPROVAL PHASE

Your design professional (engineer or registered sanitarian) or your licensed septic installer will submit a completed Disposal Works Construction Permit (septic permit) Application to the Board of Health through the Town's online permitting system, and will attach the design plans, along with any other required state and local forms (e.g. soil evaluation, any I/A specific requirements). Once that application has been deemed complete, the Board of Health has 45 days to review and act upon it. If a plan is not approved in its original draft form, a new 45-day "clock" will start each time a revised plan is submitted. During this phase, your design professional may need approval in the form of a variance or local-upgrade approval that will require a hearing before the Board of Health. In some cases, your abutters may need to be notified. Once this process is complete, your plan will be approved.

INSTALLATION PHASE

If, upon plan approval, you have not already determined who will construct your new system, the next step is to hire a septic installer who is licensed to operate in the Town. Once selected, the installer must obtain a septic permit from the Board of Health prior to beginning construction of the system. The permit cannot be issued until the permit fee is paid and the Board of Health has been provided with all required supporting documents (e.g. 2 original stamped copies of the approved plan, any I/A specific requirements).

Multiple inspections may need to be performed by both the design professional and the Board of Health. The Board of Health does a visual inspection only, where the design professional will ensure that elevations and locations of the system are consistent with the approved plan. The installer will not be allowed to proceed until given the green light from both the design professional and the Board of Health during each phase of construction. Once the system has been fully constructed, both the design professional and installer will certify to the installation of the system.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE PHASE

Prior to issuance of the Certificate of Compliance (COC), the design professional is required to submit a certified as-built plan, and the installer and the design professional are each required to submit a form certifying that they have installed and inspected the septic system in accordance with the approved plans and specifications. Innovative/alternative (I/A) septic systems have additional required documents that must also be provided (see I/A specific requirements below). Once all paperwork has been submitted and is found to be in order, the COC be issued.

I/A SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

1. All applications for installation of I/A septic systems shall include a copy of the most recent DEP Approval Letter for the technology being proposed. The septic permit application shall clearly indicate the approval under which the applicant wishes to submit the application.
2. No COC shall be issued until a signed Owner Acknowledgement of Responsibilities is submitted to the Board of Health.
3. No COC shall be issued until a fully executed operations and maintenance (O&M) contract is submitted to the Board of Health. The service contract must meet the requirements specified in the technology Approval Letter.
4. No COC shall be issued until an I/A Notice of Disclosure has been recorded with the Registry of Deeds and/or Land Registration Office, with a copy submitted to the Board of Health.

The COC is very important, as it states that the septic system has been installed and is in compliance with all state and local regulations. This form will be needed for tax purposes and may be needed for property transfer purposes as well.

Please understand that it is your responsibility to ensure that your design professional and licensed installer submit all required paperwork to the Town. The Board of Health does not "chase after" paperwork, but only acts on what is submitted to our office.