

# ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM (OWTS)

## Permit Application Process



The onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) permit process helps to protect the public's health and our water resources by ensuring that household wastewater is effectively treated.

**Please note** that OWTS applications and permits are separate and distinct from the permits required by the Boulder County Land Use Department; other reviews and approvals may be required, per Boulder County Land Use Code or Boulder County Road Standards and Specifications.

Compliance of current uses and the status of the existing development will be verified with the Boulder County Land Use Department during the OWTS permitting process. In the event that unpermitted construction, non-conforming uses, or other land use issues are identified, the OWTS permit process may be delayed.

### APPLICATION, TESTING, AND EXCAVATION

For a smooth and efficient permitting process, follow these steps:

1. Obtain a permit application, list of registered professional engineers, and list of licensed installers from Boulder County Public Health (BCPH) at [www.septicsmart.org](http://www.septicsmart.org).
2. Schedule a detailed soil analysis with a registered professional engineer or professional geologist of your choice. **Soil analysis must meet criteria outlined in current BCPH OWTS regulations.**
3. Schedule a contractor to dig the required number of eight-foot-deep profile test pit excavations.
4. Locate and clearly mark property lines, potable water lines, and soil test holes.
5. Submit the following items to BCPH:
  - a. Completed permit application, along with:
    - 1) Accurate directions to the site.
    - 2) A plot plan of the property that includes the location of the structures, well, waterways, and OWTS components (i.e. "See attached" on application is not satisfactory and will not be accepted).  
**The application will not be accepted without the above information.**
  - b. Results of soil investigation and OWTS design (if applicable) with **original stamp and signature of engineer (or geologist).**
  - c. Permit fee (payable by cash, check, credit card, or money order; checks should be made payable to "Boulder County Public Health").

### Detailed Soil Analysis

Visual and tactile evaluation of two (or more) soil profile test pit excavations is required.

The test pit excavations must:

- Be at least four feet below the proposed depth of the infiltrative surface (bottom of chambers or gravel layer).
- Establish soil texture, structure type and grade (per Table 10-1), restrictive layers, seasonal high groundwater, and bedrock level.
- Percentage of rock content in soil (per Table 10-1A) if applicable.
- Determine the best depth for the infiltrative surface.
- **Be dug at least 24 hours prior to the site inspection by BCPH. Do not fill in perc test or profile holes before BCPH has conducted its site inspection!** (Pits can be covered with boards or gated off to prevent injury).
- Be marked or flagged so they can be easily located during the site inspection.
- Free of snow or fill material to the depth of the hole.
- **Boreholes are not acceptable.**

### **Property and Water Lines**

Property owners/applicants using public water supplies must identify the location of the waterline from the house to the street and any other potable water lines within 25 feet of the proposed absorption field. Property owners using private water supplies, such as a well or cistern, must identify the potable water line from the house. *All property owners must identify property line boundaries within 20 feet of the proposed absorption field using stakes, flags, or spray paint.*

### **Proposed Soil Treatment Area Staked**

Prior to and during construction, the proposed soil treatment area and replacement area, if any, must be protected from disturbance, compaction, or other damage by means of staking, fencing, posting, or other effective site protection methods.

### **BCPH SITE INSPECTION**

Staff will schedule a site inspection after the application, soil investigation information, and fees are received and the existence of the test pit excavations have been verified. **If the directions are incomplete and/or the property or soil test pits cannot be found, a \$250 re-inspection fee will be charged for additional evaluation.**

The access roads to the site must be free of snow and accessible with a 4-wheel drive vehicle. If it is not, that must be noted in the directions. **If the property becomes inaccessible due to a snowstorm, please call BCPH as soon as possible to reschedule the inspection.** Keep dogs away from the areas to be evaluated. Notify BCPH at time of application submittal if a **gate code** is required to access the property. **If BCPH is unable to gain access to the property or the area of the OWTS due to dogs, locked gates, or electrical fences, a \$250 re-inspection fee will be charged for an additional evaluation.**

Requests for open-hole inspections, if required, and final inspections, are to be requested by the **installer**. Inspections will be scheduled on the next available BCPH area inspection day, and notification indicating approval or denial will be left on the premises.

### **PERMIT APPROVAL**

Following the site inspection, the permit will be issued **IF** all OWTS regulations are met. The process for issuing an OWTS permit can take up to 30 business days from the time BCPH receives the application, fee, soil investigation information that meets regulations, and OWTS design (if applicable) that meets regulations.

Permits, when ready, will be sent to homeowners, installer, and engineer/designer.

**Please Note:** Not all sites are acceptable for OWTS installations, and an engineer's design does not ensure approval. Some systems also require approval by the Boulder County Board of Health.

Some permits may require the filing of notarized legal documents, such as an easement & maintenance agreement. Properties located in the Floodplain or Floodway will need approval and a Floodplain Development Permit from Boulder County Transportation. You will be notified if any such documents are required. The documents must be submitted prior to issuance of the permit.



**Boulder County Public Health**  
**Application for Permit to Install, Construct,**  
**Alter or Repair an Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS)**

3450 Broadway St. Boulder, CO

Ph: 303-441-1564

Email: HealthOWS@bouldercounty.org

Fax: 303-441-1468

**Application Date:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**Is Test Pit Ready for Inspection?**  YES  NO  N/A

**Type of Permit:**

- New – ONLY use if property has never had a structure
- Major Repair
- Minor Repair – list what is being replaced: \_\_\_\_\_
- Minor Over the Counter – list what is being replaced: \_\_\_\_\_
- Use Permit: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Applying:**

- Undocumented System  Failing System  Failed PT Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- Upgrading Capacity  System Old/Nearing Failure  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Property/Site Information:**

Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of [Bedrooms] or [Employees]: \_\_\_\_\_ Area of lot in acres: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Structure Served by OWTS:  Residential  Commercial  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Water Source:  Well  Cistern  Spring  Water District  No Water

Water District Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Certified Professionals:**

Engineer: \_\_\_\_\_

Installer: \_\_\_\_\_

Maintenance Provider (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Owner on Record and Owner Contact Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information, If Different from Owner on Record**

Name & Involvement with Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Application for Permit to Install, Construct,**  
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**PLEASE PROVIDE** detailed instructions to the property.

**DIRECTIONS TO PROPERTY**

N  
W E  
S

**PLEASE SKETCH** a plot plan below showing the location of (proposed & existing) buildings, wells, springs, cisterns, waterlines, underground utilities, (existing & proposed) septic system components, property boundaries, and any physical features such as streams, lakes, ditches, gulches or rock formations on the property.

**PLOT PLAN OF PROPERTY**

N  
W E  
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**Internal use only:**

Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Area # \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

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