

This policy is intended to clarify requirements for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) when change in residential use is proposed. The policy outlines requirements for OWTS permitting and approval by Boulder County Public Health.

## Definitions

- **Convenience bathroom:** a half-bathroom (toilet and hand-sink only) that is to only be used by the residents of the main dwelling.
- **Accessory structure:** is used by the residents of the main dwelling. It can have a convenience bathroom and wet-bar sink. The building cannot have shower, bathtub, and/or stove.
- **Accessory dwelling unit (ADU):** a dwelling unit which is accessory to a permitted Principal Use (main dwelling). This building can have a shower, bathtub, and/or stove. This includes a disaster recovery unit.

*Note: Community Planning may have additional/different definitions.*

## Requirements

- 1) If residential use of septic system is changing (adding bedrooms or an ADU) based on what was permitted and approved, the following will be required:
  - a) Permit requirements:

Engineering Report Recommendations	Permit Type Required
Engineer report shows soil treatment area (STA) needs to be altered (may also include septic tank and/or sewer line)	Major Repair Permit
Engineer report shows septic tank and/or sewer line will be added or replaced	Major Repair Permit
Engineer report shows no construction needed on OWTS	Use Permit and Inspection Fee

- b) Engineer report that includes:
      - i) Minimum of two test pits with soil analysis
        - (1) If soil analysis for existing, approved OWTS permit meets requirements in current regulations this requirement may be waived
      - ii) Site plan which includes existing and proposed structures, setback features, and current OWTS
      - iii) Evaluation and calculations using current code and soil data from current test pits
      - iv) Verification of adequacy of current system and/or any required changes needed

- v) Design of any new connections/sewer lines and components that may be required
- c) A certified NAWT inspection will be required unless the building or buildings connected to the onsite wastewater treatment system are no longer there or will be demolished
  - i) If a property transfer inspection was completed in the previous 12 months, this requirement may be waived. will be allowed
- d) Conditions that may apply:
  - If seasonal groundwater is determined to be higher than when the soil treatment area (STA) was permitted and installed, STA replacement may be required
  - The septic tank must meet current requirements for retention time and size
  - Single compartment tanks will not be approved unless a second tank is added in series

\*Components that will not otherwise be altered won't be required to meet current code (Example: risers above grade, effluent screens, pressure dosed, soil replacement with sand)

- 2) If another structure is being added to the septic system and it meets the definition of an accessory structure, the following will be required:
  - a) Minor Repair Permit
  - b) Engineer report that includes:
    - i) Site plan which includes existing and proposed structures, setback features, and current OWTS
    - ii) Specifications for connecting the new sewer line to the existing OWTS
    - iii) Verification that the wastewater generated in the accessory structure is only from the residents of the main dwelling and therefore capacity is not changing
      - (1) If wastewater generated in the accessory structure will not come from the residents of the main dwelling and/or is not the typical composition of untreated domestic wastewater, this may be subject to requirements in the "Non-Residential Change of Use Policy"

Some situations will not meet these exact criteria, if you aren't sure where you fit into these scenarios and definitions, please contact us at 303-441-1564 or [healthows@bouldercounty.org](mailto:healthows@bouldercounty.org).

Previous versions:

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