

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 only to be used by the occupants of the main dwelling.
- **Accessory structure:** a structure that is limited to a convenience bathroom, wet-bar sink, washer, and dryer and is only to be used by the occupants of the main dwelling. This structure cannot have a shower, bathtub, or stove.
- **Accessory dwelling unit (ADU):** a dwelling unit that is accessory to a permitted Principal Use (main dwelling). This building can have a shower, bathtub, and stove if allowed by Community Planning. This includes a disaster recovery unit.

Note: Community Planning may have additional or different definitions.



Requirements

1) If residential use of the OWTS is changing (adding bedrooms or an ADU)

based on what was permitted and approved, the following will be required:

a) An engineer report that includes:

- i) Minimum of two test pits with soil analysis.
 - i. If soil analysis for the existing approved OWTS permit meets the current regulations, this requirement may be waived.
- ii) Evaluation of test pit soil analysis collected under current regulations.
- iii) Wastewater flow and strength calculations using Section 9 of Boulder County OWTS Regulations.
- iv) Verification whether the current system is adequate to treat proposed wastewater and/or any required changes needed using current regulations.
- v) Site plan that includes existing and proposed structures, setback features, current OWTS layout, and any proposed components.
- vi) Design of any new connections/sewer lines and components that may be required.

b) A certified NAWT inspection:

- i) Required except in cases where the building(s) connected to the OWTS will be demolished.
- ii) Inspections completed within the past 12 months will be allowed.

c) Conditions that may apply:

- If seasonal groundwater is 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.
- Any existing single-compartment tanks will not be approved unless a second tank is added in series.

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

2) If another structure is being added to the existing OWTS and it meets the definition of an accessory structure, the following will be required:

a) **Engineer report that includes:**

- i) Site plan that includes existing and proposed structures, setback features, current OWTS layout, and any proposed components.
- 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, therefore the system's design flow is not changing.
 - i. 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"

*See next page for permitting requirements.

3) Permitting Requirements for the above scenarios:

Adding Bedrooms or an Accessory Dwelling	
When the engineer report shows that the soil treatment area (STA) needs to be altered or replaced, and/or the septic tank and/or sewer line will be added or replaced.	Major Repair Permit Associated with Property Improvements
Adding an Accessory Structure	
When connecting to the existing OWTS and design flow is not increasing.	Minor Repair Permit
When designing a new OWTS that will be served by the accessory structure.	Major Repair Permit Associated with Property Improvements
No Construction Needed	
Engineer report shows no construction is needed on OWTS.	Use Permit; Revision and additional inspection fees may apply

Some situations will not meet these exact criteria, if you are unsure where you fit into these scenarios and definitions, please contact us at 303-441-1564 or HealthOWS@bouldercounty.gov.

