

## **General Topics**

### **Q: Where are your offices located and how can I contact an Environment Officer for my area?**

A: There is a list of local contact under the “Contacts” section of the onsite program website.

### **Q: Do I need to apply to install an onsite wastewater management system? How do I get an application?**

A: A certified installer will apply for the registration. If you are doing the install, you need to submit an application prior to proceeding with the installation. A copy of the application can be found on the onsite program website.

### **Q: Where can I send completed paperwork?**

A: Your completed application can be sent to the local environment officer in your area. There is a list of local contact under the “Contacts” section of the onsite program website.

### **Q: Who is certified to install septic systems in the Province and where can I find a list of contactors?**

A: A certified installer is someone who has been trained and certified by the province to design and install onsite wastewater management systems. A list of certified installers is available on the Lists of Certified Installers and Registered Sewage Haulers dropdown.

### **Q: Can I install my own septic system?**

A: A homeowner can install their own system. If a contractor is hired to do any part of the work (such as excavating the hole for a holding tank), the contractor must work under the direct supervision and direction of the home owner.

### **Q: What are my options for onsite wastewater management on my property?**

A: A number of factors go into the determination of onsite wastewater management options for a specific piece of property, such as property size and location, soil conditions, etc. It is recommended that you contact a Certified Installer or your local Environment Officer to discuss what options may be available for your specific property.

### **Q: If I cannot install a septic field, what are my other options?**

A: In many cases lots are limited to holding tank service only, unless municipal sewer is available. Please contact the local municipality to determine eligibility for sewer connection.

### **Q: Who can apply for a registration or a variance to allow for an installation on a non-conforming lot?**

A: The current owner of the lot (or their certified installer on their behalf) can apply.

**Q: Where can I find information about the designs of septic systems?**

A: Onsite wastewater management systems require consideration of many design standards and legislation. Department requirements are specified within the Supplementary Information, Onsite Wastewater Management Systems Regulation, and related guidelines available from the program website.

**Q: How much does it cost to register an onsite wastewater management system?**

A: The cost to register various types of onsite wastewater management systems can be found on the application forms that are available in the Application Forms and Worksheets drop down section on the onsite program website.

**Q: How long before I can get an approval?**

A: Review and approval of an application to register an onsite wastewater management system varies. Most systems will receive approval within 10 working days, however, this timeline will be longer if the application is incomplete or contains incorrect information.

**Q: What is a nutrient management zone and how does it affect onsite systems?**

A: The Nutrient Management Regulation prohibits the installation of onsite wastewater management systems such as disposal fields and pit or pail privies within areas referred to as Zone N4. This regulation references soil zones that have been mapped throughout the province using soil surveys to describe topography and soil composition and summarize them into categories known as Agricultural Capability Classes. Zone N4 encompasses soils containing an Agricultural Capability Class of 6, 7 or Organic. There is a website that allows access to these maps at <https://agrimaps.gov.mb.ca/agrimaps/>. Please contact your local environment officer if you have concerns about this potential restriction.

**Q: Can I connect to my neighbour's field or holding tank?**

A: No. An onsite wastewater management system must be located on the same parcel of land on which the building or dwelling the system serves.

**Q: Can I install an onsite system within a provincial park?**

A: A holding tank can be installed within the park providing that all setback requirements can be met, and it is accessible to a registered sewage hauler for pump out services. Restrictions apply to the installation of disposal fields (septic field or greywater field) within a provincial park. Please contact an Environment Officer to discuss your options if your lot is not accessible to sewage hauler services. A Provincial Park permit will also be required for any system. Please contact your local provincial park office for more information.

**Q: Can I direct wastewater from my garage to the existing holding tank/septic field connected to my dwelling?**

A: Yes, as long as the additional wastewater flow does not exceed the design capacity of the disposal field. Note that only sewage and/or greywater can be directed to a disposal field.

**Q: Can I connect two buildings to one septic system (tank/field)?**

A: Yes, as long as the additional wastewater flow does not exceed the design capacity of the system (tank and field). Note that only sewage and/or greywater can be directed to a disposal field. A sewage ejector system cannot be connected to more than one single-family dwelling.

**Q: What Onsite Wastewater Management System requirements apply to a secondary/granny suite?**

A: There are many options to handle wastewater generated by a secondary suite. It is recommended that you contact a Certified Installer to help determine the most suitable option for your specific circumstances. Note that an existing septic system (tank and/or field) must not receive additional wastewater flows beyond the capacity it was designed for. Also, a secondary suite cannot be connected to an existing sewage ejector system.

**Q: Can I install an outhouse or privy?**

A: Maybe. Many types of onsite systems are often referred to as an outhouse. These include pit privy (earthen pit), vault privy (sealed storage tank), and pail privy (removable pail). Pail and pit privies cannot be installed in areas referred to as Nutrient Management Zone N4, and cannot have a pressurized water system. Otherwise, privies can be installed as long as they meet other aspects of the regulation. Privy systems are exempt from registration. You should contact your local municipality to ensure municipal by-laws do not prohibit these systems in your area.

**Q: Can I install a composting toilet?**

A: Yes. Composting toilets are exempt from registration requirements but must comply with NSF Standard 41 for Non-Liquid Saturated Treatment Systems as published by the National Sanitation Foundation, and bear a valid stamp or mark indicating certification in accordance with that standard.

**Q: Can I install a grinder pump in my crawlspace?**

A: Consult with your plumber or a Certified Installer to determine if a grinder pump can be utilized in your crawlspace.

**Q: What is the best time of year to empty my septic tank?**

A: In the summer or early fall.

**Q: Why can't I empty my septic tank in Winter?**

A: Most municipal wastewater lagoons cannot accept septage (the sludge that builds up in the sedimentation chamber of your septic tank) between October 15<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> of

the following year. Emptying the tank in freezing temperatures could lead to freezing of the tank and disposal field.

**Q: Where can my sewage hauler haul my septage in winter?**

A: Some municipal wastewater treatment systems in larger centers may be able to accept septage in the winter. It is recommended that you discuss with a registered sewage hauler or your local environment officer for options in case of an emergency.

**Q: Can the contents of a septic tank be spread on land?**

A: Only septage (the sludge that builds up in the sedimentation chamber of your septic tank) can be applied to agricultural land under the control of the owner where it originated from if done so in compliance with Schedule C of the regulation. Schedule C imposes property size, setback and other requirements. Sewage including the contents of a holding tank cannot be land applied.

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