

OBTAINING A SEWAGE DISPOSAL DESIGN

Obtaining a building permit in San Juan County requires that you have an On-Site Septic Design showing sufficient sewage disposal capacity for the anticipated project.

The following outline of the process is provided to help de-mystify the process for getting a septic system designed:

SOIL EVALUATION: The first step in designing an on-site septic system is to get the soils on your lot, in the location of the future septic system drainfield, assessed for depth and type of soil available for treatment. This is done by contacting a Washington State licensed On-Site Sewage System designer. You may find a list of designers on the Washington State Department of Licensing website or a list can be obtained from our office showing those State licensed designers that reside in San Juan County.

The depth of the soil that is suitable for sewage treatment determines the type of on-site system required (i.e. Standard Gravity Feed, Pressure Feed or Pre-treatment system).

The type of soil suitable for sewage treatment, along with the anticipated hydraulic load, determines the size of the drainfield.

The designer also takes into account such things as topography, nearby water bodies, wells, property lines etc.

SYSTEM DESIGN: Taking the information from the site visit and soil logs the designer then designs an appropriate septic system, suitable to the characteristics of your lot and the anticipated usage.

DESIGN SUBMISSION: The designer submits the Design Application to the Health Department for approval along with the required fees. The Health Department first sends the Design Application to the Department of Community Development, where it is reviewed for critical areas such as wetlands, hazardous slopes and endangered species habitats. When the design is returned to the Health Department it is reviewed. If acceptable, when reviewed against the site characteristics and the anticipated sewage loading, the design is approved and assigned a Design Number. The Design is then valid for a period of time after it is assigned the Design Number (currently 4 years).

INSTALLATION: At any time after the Design Number is assigned and before the Design expires the system may be installed. The installation is to be done by a contractor licensed to install septic systems in San Juan County (a list is available from the Health Department). The contractor obtains a Permit to Install **and then** installs the system.

If the system is not installed before the Design has expired, a request for renewal may be submitted. If the Design meets current standards at the time of renewal it may be renewed for another period of time (currently 4 more years).

AS-BUILT: The contractor installing the system is responsible to provide San Juan County an As-Built completed and signed by a licensed Designer (a site-plan drawing showing the system as it was actually installed once the system is installed and inspected by the Designer and/or the Health Department).

It is prudent for the homeowner to request a copy for his/her own records from the installer.

The As-Built becomes part of the permanent record for that system on file with the San Juan County Health Department.

START UP: The last section of the Installation Permit to be completed is the START UP. The START UP is verified by the Installer or Designer when the system has been hooked up to the house plumbing and the system is complete and functioning properly from start to finish (including properly functioning pumps, timers and all other components).

FINAL: Following satisfactory final inspection of the installation, submission of an acceptable As-Built and verification of Start Up, the Design is given Final approval. Final approval of the installed on-site septic system is required before the final building inspection can be signed and building occupancy approved. A copy of the Final Installation Permit is kept on file in the County data base.

The original copy of the finalized On-Site Sewage Design is kept on file with the San Juan County Health Department. It is most easily referenced by providing the twelve-digit Tax Parcel Number (TPN) for your lot.