



TOWN OF WAYLAND Board of Health

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HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK ON A SEPTIC SYSTEM (guide 1 of 2)

This guide outlines the important steps in the process to repair/replace or upgrade your onsite wastewater (septic) system and explains what you need to know before you submit your application to the Health Department.

- ***Once you have reviewed this guide you should also review our handout, "Guide for Repair Work to Septic Systems". The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection authorizes the legally designated local health authorities in cities and towns to enforce the provisions of Title 5 of the State Environmental Code (septic system regulations), and to adopt its own regulations as the Board deems necessary.***

There are 5 common scenarios with your septic system that you will likely be dealing with. Which scenario are you?

Scenario 1: You want to sell your house and you need a Title 5 inspection

1. You will need to hire a Title 5 System Inspector. All Title 5 System Inspectors are licensed with the State DEP. A link to the list of Certified Title 5 Inspectors: [ADD LINK HERE](#)

2. Your Title 5 System Inspector will need to look at your property file at the Board of Health office and gather information on your septic system so they are able to locate it to conduct the inspection. Your system inspector will look for plans, permits, as-built drawings and previous Title 5 Inspection reports (if any were done previously). During this process they should use this information to determine the number of bedrooms your septic system is designed for. They will also need to obtain water meter readings from the DPW Department (in Town Building). Once these steps are completed they will locate the septic system components and conduct an inspection to determine if the system is functioning properly or if it is failed. A report will be completed by the system inspector and submitted to the Health Department with a \$50.00 application fee. If your system failed go to step 1. If your system passed the inspection then you have completed the process for your septic system. Your inspection report is good for 2 years and it's good for a 3rd year if you have the system pumped by or prior to the date of the inspection for both of the 2 years.

Scenario 2: You had a Title 5 Inspection and you need a new component or repair as a result of the inspection

1. You will need a permit with our office for this work and you will need to hire a licensed Installer to do the work on your septic system. We have a list of licensed Installers. The licensed installer will contact our department to conduct an inspection of the work. After the work is completed the installer will submit an as-built to our office. Once the as-built is received we will issue the Certificate of Compliance.

Scenario 3: You had a Title 5 inspection and your septic system failed, go to step 1.

Scenario 4: You are not selling your house but your septic is failing, go to step 1.

Scenario 5: You want to add a bedroom to your house (first go to CRITICAL step)

- **Step 1. There are 6 steps in the process for you to follow. The first step in the process of repairing your failing septic system or replacing/upgrading your septic system is to contact a Registered Sanitarian or Professional Engineer to research files, town documents and conduct soil testing at your property. You or your Registered Sanitarian/Professional Engineer should also check with the Conservation Department to determine if any wetland, flood plain, or other environmental issues exist that may require additional approvals regarding your project. The Sanitarian or Engineer will then contact our office to schedule soil testing with the inspector or Director, a Disposal Works Construction Permit must be completed and a fee will be due. House characteristics, soil testing results, and site**

conditions can dictate size, shape and cost of septic. Title 5 Regulations and Wayland Board of Health Local Regulations will need to be referenced. All these things will be looked at by your Sanitarian or Engineer to determine where your new septic system should be located.

It is important to communicate your expectations and concerns with your Sanitarian or Engineer prior to starting the project. Potential or desired locations of your new septic system, size and scope of addition plans, relocation of utilities, accommodating future landscape features or pools/sports courts, access issues, restorations issues, potential aesthetic changes such as raised grades or tree removal are some concerns you may have.

- **Critical step: Determining if your property is located in a Zone II (Nitrogen Sensitive area).** Nitrogen Sensitive areas (Zone II's) are protective areas/zones where the town wells draw groundwater under extreme pumping conditions (when there are low levels in the aquifer). Due to the environmentally sensitive nature of these protective zones, nitrogen, a by-product of sewage, is highly regulated. Expansion of septic systems can be limited or prevented within a Zone II. Additions of living space can be limited.
1. **You or your engineer/sanitarian will need to look at the Zone II map of the Town to determine if your property is located within this jurisdictional area.**
 - A. **If your property is located in a Zone II Nitrogen Sensitive area and you want to add a bedroom or add heated finished living space:**

Adding bedrooms must meet stringent State DEP Regulations. To add a bedroom within a Zone II, you need to have 10,000 square feet of land area per bedroom (4 bedrooms would require 40,000 square feet of land area). If you cannot meet this requirement at your property and you want to use nitrogen reducing technology (Innovative and Alternative Technology) you should know that the Board of Health has a policy for use of Innovative and Alternative Technology **including** thresholds on allowable square footage of heated finished living space. Please review our policy. Once you have completed this step go back to Step 1.

What is Innovative and Alternative technology? Innovative and Alternative Technology to reduce nitrogen is a system that is similar to a mini treatment plant. For a property located in a Zone II, it is typically a unit that is added to a conventional septic system to reduce nitrogen. There are many types of these technologies and any system that is considered must be State DEP approved technology to reduce nitrogen. I/A technologies add extra cost to a septic system. Also for this type of system there are operation and maintenance requirements, fees, and reporting to meet State DEP Regulations. If you are considering this option to add a bedroom you would need to work with a Registered Sanitarian or Professional Engineer to ensure the appropriate State approved technology for your property is considered. You must also meet the

Board of Health Policy requirements and a hearing would be required with the Board of Health for approval.

B. If your property is not located in a Zone II

If you know your current septic system is a cesspool or leaching pit then to add a bedroom you will need to upgrade to a septic system that complies with today's State Title 5 Regulations and Town Board of Health Septic System Regulations. Adding a bedroom triggers the Board of Health New Construction Septic System Regulations. Go back to Step 1.

- **Step 2. After soil testing is conducted the Sanitarian or Engineer will design a septic system and submit the design to our office. The inspector or Director will then review the design for compliance with Title 5 Regulations and Wayland Board of Health Local Regulations and work with the Sanitarian/Engineer if any revisions are necessary. After this process the plan will be ready for approval and the permit will be issued. State Regulations for Title 5 allow up to 45 days for septic system plan review but we try to be as efficient as possible and complete our review and approval as quickly as we are able. In the spring it can become very busy so it's important to start the process as soon as possible if you are on a timeline for the sale of a property. You or your Sanitarian/Professional Engineer contact the Conservation Department to see if there are any conservation issues that need to be considered. Please keep communication open as they have different requirements for the review process.**
- **Step 3. After the septic design is approved by our office you will need to hire a Licensed Installer to install the new septic system. Licensed Installers are licensed with the Town of Wayland Board of Health. We have a list of Licensed Installers which can be found on our website.**
- **Step 4. The Licensed Installer will coordinate the inspections with our office. During construction of the new septic system the inspector or Director will conduct an excavation inspection and a final inspection. Other inspections will be conducted as needed or as deemed necessary.**
- **Step 5. After the final inspection the Sanitarian or Engineer that you hired will need to obtain the as-built elevations and locations of the septic system, the Licensed Installer will also do an as-built. Both as-builts will**

be submitted to the Board of Health office for staff review and once all is confirmed to be approvable the Certificate of Compliance will be issued.

- **Step 6. If you are selling your house and your septic system failed Title 5 then you will need the Certificate of Compliance for the sale of your property.**

The Board of Health staff is available to assist you if questions or concerns arise during this process. If you require assistance we encourage you to call and set up an appointment so we can dedicate adequate time to discuss your project. To schedule an appointment our office number is: (508)-358-3617.