



**Q: What's our role?**

**A:** The Ottawa Septic System Office is the regulator for the City of Ottawa. Our role is to enforce any rules & regulations defined by provincial law as stipulated in the Ontario Building Code.

**Q: Has the regulations always been governed under the Ontario Building Code?**

**A:** No – Effective April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1998, the responsibilities of the on-site sewage systems with a total daily flow of less than 10,000 litres per day were legislated from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code is a direct transfer of responsibilities from the Environmental Protection Act.

**Q: How is a septic system defined under the Ontario Building Code?**

**A:** The Building Code Act defines a sewage system as a “building” and as such, a sewage system that is discharging effluent onto the surface of the ground, or has not been maintained or operated in accordance with the Ontario Building Code, is determined to be an unsafe ‘building’.

**Q: Who can design my septic system plan?**

**A:** There are 3 avenues of approach: 1- Licensed designer 2-Licensed installer 3-Property owner. During the design phase of your septic system replacement/new construction project, the following topics are generally covered:

- **Site visit to verify lot features like lot lines, current well placement, inventory current dwelling for number of bedrooms/plumbing fixtures/finished floor area**
- **tank & bed sizing to accommodate size of dwelling,**
- **Best placement of system on lot respecting restricted distances to any lot features,**
- **Elevations of lot, soil & water table conditions**

This information is required to adequately complete the Application for Demolition/Construction. It is strongly recommended that the licensed installer/designer submit the application on behalf of the property owner. If the property owner engages in this design service, a letter of authorization/agency is required to release any approved applications to an individual other than the property owner.

**Q: When do I need to submit an application?**

**A:**

1. Building a new home/building that is not serviced by City sewer or water
2. Renovating your current home – especially when adding bedrooms, more plumbing fixtures or finished floor area in excess of 15% of the current foot print
3. Replacing an aging system, that may have already exhausted its life span of 20-30years
4. Altering or remediating any part of the tank or leaching bed due to accidental interference (i.e digging a hole to install a deck post, large calliper tree)
5. Failing system that permits raw sewage to exit directly to the surface (i.e. leak in tank, pipe/chamber in bed that is blocked/crushed preventing effluent from tank to flow into bed

**Q: What is the septic application process for septic system replacement/new construction ?**

**A:** For new/replacement systems – obtain copy of Application for Demolition/Construction application (11 pages in total), suggest consulting a licensed installer or qualified designer to determine the septic system design. This completed application is to be submitted directly to our offices:

- Application requirements: Three (3) copies ,
- Fee: Payment at time of submission (Fees for residential applications are on our Fee Schedule).
- Supporting documents: copy of site survey, tax bill, agreement to purchase or Title & Deed indicating property ownership/ legal & civic address description of property in question.
- Response Time: The building Code directs that these be reviewed within a 10 day window, however our offices endeavour to respond within 5 business days – pending submission of all related documents/drawings/information as requested by the area inspector
- Of note, new housing construction – septic applications are required to be approved prior to building application submission directly to the City of Ottawa Plans & Building departments.

*Inquiries may be directed to Ottawa Septic System Office*

*Ontario Building Code Part 8 Sewage System may be accessed via [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)*

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