

## Builders and Land Developers

When a division of land is occurring and there is a plan for developing seven or more lots/units on that land, the developer of the land or the landowner needs to be in contact with MDNR. After receiving approval from MDNR the landowner or the developer, for each separate lot, must meet the requirements of the OWTS code for Johnson County.

## Easements

An easement is the right to use another person's real estate for a specific purpose. Easements run with the land, so when the land is sold, the easement is not extinguished; the right to use it goes to the new owner. An easement for part or all components for an OWTS may be "granted" or "reserved" and is typically included in a document such as a deed or other officially recorded document. The landowner burdened with the easement retains ownership of the land within the easement and pays taxes on it. Easements usually have a specified width and can be used for right-of-ways, placement of utility poles, utility trenches, water lines, and sewer lines.

### Registered Installers :

Notify JCCHS prior to 9:00 am on the day before the system is completed.

## Installer Notices

### Non-registered Installers :

Notify JCCHS **prior** to 9:00 am **two days before** the system is completed.

The Johnson County Code of Health Regulations Section 3.2.7.16 **requires** that notification of installation be given to JCCHS **prior** to beginning installation of an OWTS.

Any system must be maintained in a condition, which allows for a complete inspection until 3:00 pm on the



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Assessor - (660) 747-9822

Johnson County Floodplain Management  
(660) 747-9822

MU Extension  
(660) 747-3193  
[www.extension.missouri.edu](http://www.extension.missouri.edu)

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
(816) 622-7000  
[www.dnr.mo.gov](http://www.dnr.mo.gov)

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services  
[www.dhss.mo.gov](http://www.dhss.mo.gov)

Environmental Health Services  
723 PCA Road  
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Phone: 660-747-6121 ext 258  
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# Johnson County, Missouri Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems Ordinance

The Johnson County Commission approved the Johnson County Code of Health Regulations Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) Ordinance effective April 9, 2006.

**Prior to beginning any construction activity (including soil disturbance)** in anticipation of the construction of buildings where people will live, work, or assemble, the property owner or their agent shall contract for a soil morphology or percolation test in the proposed area of the OWTS and apply for an OWTS permit.

## OWTS Checklist

Application requirements to permit a proposed onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS):

- ✓ Warranty Deed (Recorder's Office)
- ✓ Aerial Photo (Assessor's Office)
- ✓ Parcel Card (Assessor's Office)
- ✓ Soil Morphology or Percolation Test
- ✓ Drawing of Proposed OWTS
- ✓ Completed JCCHS Application
- ✓ Permit Fee Paid
- ✓ Contact **660-747-6121 ext. 258**



## Common Questions

### **Q: What is OWTS?**

A: OWTS stands for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems, it includes septic tanks, absorption fields, evaporation ponds/ lagoons, all other forms of sewage disposal and treatment.

### **Q: What is the cost of an OWTS Permit?**

A: The cost of a permit is \$200.00. Personal checks, money orders, and cash will be accepted.

### **Q: What is the timeframe from the time I apply for a permit to the time I have approval to begin construction?**

A: The timeframe will depend on the time it takes the property owner to complete the application, schedule a soil evaluation and arrange for a pre-site evaluation with JCCHS. This process can be expected to take 3-5 business days for a conventional OWTS. Engineered systems can be expected to take longer based on the design and the design review.

### **Q: Is gray water allowed to flow freely from a house on the ground's surface?**

A: No. Gray water is defined as any waste discharged from lavatories, bathtubs, showers, sinks, clothes washers and laundry sinks. This wastewater must be disposed of through an OWTS.

## Questions About Septic Systems and Acreage

### **Q: Is there an acreage exemption in the OWTS ordinance?**

A: No, all installations and major modifications require a permit, approval prior to construction and a final inspection and/or certification!! There is a license (not permit) exemption for homeowners to install or perform major modification of their OWTS as long as the homeowner is operating the excavation equipment, otherwise, any person assisting with the installation or major modification operating excavation equipment must be licensed.

### **Q: May I install an OWTS on a lot less than one acre?**

A: Yes; however, lot sizes smaller than one acre will be considered only if the site is capable of handling water and sewage. Therefore, it is recommended that land that will require an OWTS not be subdivided into parcels less than one acre. Most sites less than 2.5 acres have too little area for a lagoon when taking into account the setback distances required.

## Questions about Lagoons

### **Q: Will the installation of a lagoon require a percolation or soil morphology test?**

A: Yes. A percolation or soil morphology test will be required on all sites regardless of OWTS type. Many of the soils in Johnson County are unsuitable for OWTS due to rock, groundwater, and clay content. Furthermore, a full site evaluation is conducted by the percolation or soil morphology tester to identify other site conditions such as physical structures, water wells, and landscape position to find the best location for the type of OWTS desired. The OWTS must be installed in the area that the percolation or soil morphology test was conducted.

### **Q: Is it true that a lagoon will require pretreatment such as a septic tank?**

A: Lagoons on properties less than 5 acres will require a pretreatment device (septic tank) prior to discharging into the lagoon. Using pretreatment can increase the effluent quality discharging from the lagoon, decrease odors and increase the overall life expectancy of the lagoon. It is recommended that all lagoons have a pretreatment device prior to discharging into a lagoon.

### **Q: Do lagoons require a perimeter fence?**

A: Yes. All lagoons shall be enclosed with a perimeter fence. The fence should be 4 foot high or taller fence of welded, woven, or chain-link 14 gauge wire to keep out children, animals, and livestock. Hog or cattle panels may also be used. A gate or fence panel large enough to allow access for maintenance and mowing equipment should also be installed. The fence MUST be constructed prior to occupancy of the home.

### **Q: Can more than one home be connected to a**

### **lagoon?**

A: In order for more than one home to be connected to a discharging lagoon, the lagoon must have a National Pollutant Discharge Eliminating System (NPDES) operating permit from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The requirements of this NPDES permit are often not cost effective for flows less than 3000 gallons per day. JCCHS can not permit or allow lagoons, other than for one single-family residence. All other surface discharging systems must have an NPDES operating permit or be in compliance with Chapter 644 RSMo, which the MDNR regulates.

### **Q: What are the setback distances for a lagoon from property lines and structures?**

A: Setback distances include but not limited to:

- Must be 100 feet from the home that it serves
- 200 feet from any other existing home or inhabitable structure
- 75 feet from the lagoon's water's edge to the nearest property line
- 100 feet from the lagoon's discharge pipe to the nearest property line.
- 50 feet from all trees

## Complaints

To file a complaint on an OWTS that is a public health hazard/nuisance, contact the Environmental Health Office for a complaint form. All OWTS complaints must be signed.

## Floodplain

Floodplain maps for the unincorporated areas of Johnson County as well as the cities of Warrensburg, Holden, and Knob Noster are available for viewing in the Johnson County Assessors office. If you are building in a special flood hazard area in the unincorporated areas of Johnson County, you will need to obtain a permit from the Assessors office. (Courteous of Johnson County Courthouse website)

## 911 Addresses

Any new construction of an OWTS will not be granted final approval until the property has an address assigned. Addresses are assigned in the Assessor's Office and can be assigned when asking for the Parcel Card and Aerial Photo.