



COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health

Administration
Behavioral Health

Clinic Services
Emergency Medical Services
Environmental Health/Animal Services

Public Health
Public Administrator/Public Guardian

Fire Recovery and Rebuilding Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

The following scenarios attempt to summarize what actions will likely need to be taken before the Environmental Health Bureau can approve construction permits.

Permitted Single Family Dwelling / OWTS Record on file with EHB

High temperatures from fire and heavy loads from emergency vehicles can damage septic tanks, distribution piping and disposal fields. Fire debris can make its way into the sewer system during property restoration.

Tank: Have a performance evaluation report prepared by a licensed septic contractor to document structural integrity of the septic tank (and pump chamber if applicable). As necessary, have tank pumped by licensed waste hauler to clear any debris.

An alternative OWTS or pump chamber with damaged electrical components may require an electrical permit from Building Services prior to repair.

Disposal Field: Determine the condition of the distribution piping and disposal field by means of a televised inspection via a “snake & locate” by licensed septic contractor to ensure distribution and disposal field piping has not melted or collapsed. A hydraulic load test is recommended (but not required) to ensure the disposal field can accept water.

Permitted Single Family Dwelling / No OWTS Record on file with EHB

High temperatures from fire and heavy loads from emergency vehicles can damage septic tanks, distribution piping and disposal fields. Fire debris can make its way into the sewer system during property restoration.

In order to utilize an existing OWTS, property owner must provide a site plan to demonstrate the capacity and layout to the extent feasible. No additional OWTS permit fees would apply.

Tank: Have a performance evaluation report prepared by a licensed septic contractor to document structural integrity of the septic tank (and pump chamber if applicable). As necessary, have tank pumped by licensed waste hauler to clear any debris. ***If the number of bedrooms will increase*** and historical records are unavailable, an undamaged tank may still require pumping in order to demonstrate its capacity.

An alternative OWTS or pump chamber with damaged electrical components may require an electrical permit from Building Services prior to repair.

Fire Recovery and Rebuilding

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

Disposal Field (2 Parts):

Physical Location - Determine the condition of the distribution piping and disposal field by means of a televised inspection via a “snake & locate” by licensed septic contractor to ensure distribution and disposal field piping has not melted or collapsed, **and if the number of bedrooms will increase**

Absorption Area - Copy of receipt indicating tonnage of drain rock or signed as-built diagram prepared by installing contractor indicating disposal field location and dimensions.

Unpermitted Single Family Dwelling / Unpermitted OWTS

High temperatures from fire and heavy loads from emergency vehicles can damage septic tanks, distribution piping and disposal fields. Fire debris can make its way into the sewer system during property restoration.

In order to retain tank and/or disposal field must demonstrate existing OWTS complies with Monterey County Code, Chapter 15.20 to obtain permit.

Tank: Have septic tank pumped and performance evaluation report prepared by a licensed septic contractor to verify capacity, structural integrity and presence of effluent filter.

Disposal Field (3 Parts)

Physical Location - Have distribution piping and disposal field televised via a “snake & locate” by licensed septic contractor (and witnessed by EHB) to document location and ensure distribution and disposal field piping has not melted or collapsed, **and**

Absorption Area - Copy of receipt indicating tonnage of drain rock or signed as-built diagram prepared by installing contractor indicating disposal field dimensions.

Repair Area - 100% replacement area for future repair should be indicated on site plan.

New or Replacement OWTS

In the event a portion or all of the OWTS will need to be replaced, please complete the OWTS repair permit application in consultation with a licensed septic contractor and submit to EHB. EHB staff will contact you or your contractor to arrange a site visit within 48 hours of receiving the application. Please contact Nicki Fowler of the Environmental Health Bureau for details, (831) 755-4584.

[Monterey County Septic Permit Application](#)

Performance Evaluation Report

This form is intended to serve as a guide for licensed septic contractor’s to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the onsite wastewater system, ranging from location to structural integrity to functionality. Please complete as much of the information as possible; however, if a portion of the form does not apply to your situation it may be skipped.

[Performance Evaluation Form](#)

Fire Recovery and Rebuilding

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

Temporary Residences and Wastewater Disposal Facilities

In order to limit impacts to health and safety of the environment and local residents, the Environmental Health Bureau must ensure that any temporary residence, as described in the Recovery Guidelines, employs a safe and sanitary method of wastewater disposal.

Onsite Chemical Toilets

An exception to Monterey County, Section 15.20.020, will be allowed so that chemical toilets may be utilized throughout the timeframe specified by the Board of Supervisors. Prior to bringing a temporary residence on site, the property owner would need to furnish a chemical toilet maintenance and disposal contract to the Environmental Health Bureau.

Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS)

Prior to connecting to an existing OWTS, EHB will require that the septic tank and disposal field be demonstrated to exist in good condition by way of a performance evaluation.

If the OWTS is in need of replacement, it should be designed and installed with enough capacity to serve a future permanent residence.

Minimum OWTS Capacity Specifications

Summarized from Monterey County Code, Chapter 15.20, Sewage Disposal

# of Bedrooms	Existing or Rebuilt Single Family Dwelling			New or Unpermitted Single Family Dwelling		
	Tank Capacity in gallons (with garbage disposal)	Tank Capacity in gallons (no garbage disposal)	Disposal Field Area in square feet	Tank Capacity in gallons (with garbage disposal)	Tank Capacity in gallons (no garbage disposal)	Disposal Field Area in square feet
1	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000
2	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000
3	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000
4	2,000	1,500	1,250	2,000	1,500	1,250
5	2,500	2,000	1,500	2,500	2,000	1,500

Drinking Water Protection

Prior to issuance of construction permits for properties served by a private well, it will be necessary to confirm that the well is still in good working order. Please have a qualified well professional conduct an evaluation at the well head to determine if any structural deficiencies exist, such as cracks, openings or burnt wiring. In addition, the well must be demonstrated to be capable of producing water for at least 30 minutes at the flow rate necessary to serve the proposed development (3 gallons per minute per dwelling). We highly recommend that a bacteriological analysis be conducted to confirm that the well is free of total coliforms and E.coli.