



**MARION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS
BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION**
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ONSITE SYSTEM EVALUATIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY PARTITIONING

Applicants considering a property partitioning must be aware that in addition to the onsite sewage system feasibility study (i.e. site evaluation) on the proposed lot(s), if there is an existing homesite a review of the existing septic system is required also.

Many times there is little information available pertaining to the existing septic system. Extensive investigation may be necessary to establish the system location, size and condition. It is imperative that a full drainfield replacement area, which meets soil and setback requirements, be provided for the existing parcel.

A complete site development plan, as well as individual site plans for each proposed parcel, is necessary. Instructions for completion of the site plan are included with this application packet. The site plan must be drawn to scale and show accurate dimensions for the proposed land division. *Proposed partitioning lines should be flagged on the property before submitting an application for review.*

A Site Evaluation application is required for each proposed undeveloped lot in the Partitioning. The site evaluation includes considerably more than just a soil feasibility study. Varying soil conditions; lot size; slopes; and placement of the house, accessory structures and wells will often determine whether the property can be approved for onsite sewage disposal. Conditions within a proposed development and on the parcels adjacent to the development can have a significant impact on whether the proposal is feasible.

Items that are considered during the site evaluation process are as follows:

- **Parcel size:** There must be sufficient area for two complete septic systems on each proposed parcel; area for the initial system and area for full replacement in the future.
- **Required setbacks:** All proposed septic systems must meet the DEQ setback requirements. A complete list of setbacks is available from our office. Some of the more common setbacks are:
 - Location of surface streams, springs, drainage ways and other bodies of water: The required setbacks must be met between the septic system and all waters.
 - Location of all existing and proposed wells: A setback of 100 feet is required between all wells and the septic disposal fields (initial and replacement). A separation of 50 feet is required between all wells and the septic tank.
 - Other common setbacks include excavations, property lines, building foundations and underground utilities.

- **Location of encumbrances on the property:** A septic system can be placed within an easement only when specifically allowed in the easement. All existing and proposed easements must be shown on the site plan submitted with the application.
- **Examination of test pits:** Soil profiles are examined to determine soil texture, structure, etc. Water table level, as indicated by soil mottling, is also examined. An inspection is made of at least 2 soil test pits, one in the initial system area and one in the replacement area. The test pits are approximately 75 feet apart with dimensions of at least 2 feet wide by 4 feet long by 5 feet deep.

An Existing System Evaluation is required on the parent parcel. If the existing system is more than 5-years old, the septic tank must be pumped and *the “Septic Tank Pumping and Inspection Form”* submitted and signed by a DEQ licensed septic tank pumper. The pumping service must indicate the condition of the septic tank on the form.

If the Marion County files have no information as to the size or the location of the existing septic system serving this property, the components of the system must be *carefully* uncovered for determination. This includes uncovering the septic tank top, inlet and outlet, distribution or drop boxes (if there are any), and the ends of all disposal field lines to determine their length and fall. *This must be done with a hand shovel to avoid damaging the system. All uncovering must be done before the application is accepted.* Please submit the location of all the components on the site plan for our confirmation in the field.

The existing septic system components are inspected to determine the condition of the system and whether the required setbacks can be met from the proposed partitioning lines.

For the Planning Department to approve a partitioning, all parcels of the partitioning must be approved for onsite sewage disposal. Once an approval has been issued, it is imperative that the area approved for sewage disposal not be disturbed. This means that no driveways, parking areas, excavation or filling activities are permitted in the approved septic area. Accessory structures cannot be placed in the area. No wells may be drilled within one hundred feet of the area.

Application delays are often due to lack of information. To avoid such delays, complete and accurate information must be included with the application. Private consultants are available that are knowledgeable in all aspects of property development. Their expertise can be invaluable in assembling the information and presenting a complete application for consideration.

At Marion County, we want the steps from Site Evaluation to System Installation to run as smoothly as possible. Please feel free to call us at (503) 588-5147 if you have any questions about the processes or specific requirements.