

## WHAT IS A SEPTIC SYSTEM OR ON-SITE SEWAGE FACILITY?

An on-site sewage facility (OSSF) is a system for the treatment and disposal of wastewater less than 5000 gallons per day (gpd) that is generated and disposed on that site. Various means of treatment and disposal are available. Soil type and water tables restrict the use of conventional septic systems in Brazoria County.

### DO I NEED ONE?

If your property is not within reach of a “city” or “public” sewer line and if your project will generate wastewater, you will require an OSSF. A building equipped with bathrooms, sinks, kitchens, washing machines, etc. will generate wastewater. Older properties with inadequate or malfunctioning facilities are required to have a new facility installed.

### WHAT MUST I DO TO HAVE ONE INSTALLED?

Have a site evaluation conducted at the location of the project (home, business, etc.) by a registered site evaluator. If the evaluation requires an alternative system, then professional plans must be drawn by a Professional Engineer or a Registered Sanitarian. All required documents shown on the permit checklist must be submitted to the Brazoria County Environmental Health Department for review prior to the issuance of a permit.

### HOW DO I OBTAIN A PERMIT TO INSTALL AND OPERATE ONE?

To obtain a permit, you must fill out an application and submit it with a set of construction drawings and a site evaluation report. The drawings must be done by either a registered engineer or registered sanitarian.

The site evaluation report must be done by a registered site evaluator.

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### A GUIDE TO OBTAINING AN ON-SITE SEWAGE FACILITY (SEPTIC SYSTEM) PERMIT.

This checklist has been prepared to help guide you through the permitting process. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at (979) 864-1600.

**To obtain a permit, the following items must be submitted:**

- ◇ A site evaluation report which includes a soils investigation of the proposed installation site. (Forms for this purpose may be obtained from this office.) The evaluation must be signed by a site evaluator.
- ◇ A completed Brazoria County Application for On-Site Sewage Facility which has been signed and notarized by the property owner.
- ◇ A scale drawing of the OSSF design prepared by either a registered engineer or registered sanitarian. The drawing must clearly detail the on-site sewage facility to be installed and any other required features.
- ◇ A technical report which includes specifications of the OSSF installation.
- ◇ Manufacturers’ specifications of the tanks, pumps, sprayers to be installed.
- ◇ If you are installing a spray irrigation system, an affidavit signed and notarized by the property owner indicating the licensee is aware of his responsibility for proper maintenance and operation of the on-site sewage facility. (Affidavit forms are available from this office and may be

notarized here.) Also, a copy of a maintenance agreement with a licensed company must be attached to the design.

- ◇ Current permit fees (including plan review and final inspection) are: \$210.00 for single family dwellings and \$410.00 for all others. If additional inspections are required \$100.00 for each trip to the job-site is required. Payment is accepted by credit card, cash, cashier’s check, or money order, made payable to the Brazoria County Environmental Health Department.
- ◇ Other items that may be requested as needed:
  - ◇ Legal documentation of property ownership – deeds, plats, etc.
  - ◇ Copy of well report
  - ◇ Any other document deemed necessary to properly review the application

The permit must clearly identify the OSSF installer. All installers doing work in Brazoria County must be registered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and with this department. To insure an installer is registered, call (979) 864-1600 or ask to see his/her current registration card.

Five business days should be allowed for review of plans and supporting documents; however, plan review may take up to 30 days. Non-standard system plans may be reviewed by the TCEQ staff in Austin.

As the property owner, you must insure that your on-site sewage facility is inspected by the Environmental Health Department and passes all inspections prior to covering it up or using it. Permits expire 12 months following the date of department approval.

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**HOW MUCH DO THEY COST AND WHO PUTS THEM IN?**

According to reports from on-site sewage facility installers, a system for a single family dwelling generally costs between \$5,000 and \$8,000. Costs will vary on the type or size of the system installed. An OSSF must be installed by an installer licensed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and registered with this department. Care must be exercised when installing these systems so that they will function as designed. Also, the average cost of services for engineers and sanitarians, are generally between \$300 and \$600.

**HOW DO I KEEP IT WORKING?**

To keep your system working and to avoid costly repairs, some basic rules should be followed. First, never dispose of household wastes, such as toxic chemicals in your system. Garbage disposals should be avoided or the system should be specially designed to accommodate the extra waste load. Secondly, conserve water whenever possible. One leaking toilet can over burden your system and cause a problem. Your system must also be properly maintained. If you have septic tanks, they should be pumped every two to three years to insure proper operation. Remember, pumping your tank is like changing your oil. You won't see immediate results but your system will keep working longer with fewer repairs. Some spray irrigation or drip emitter systems require chlorine. Consult your installer for more information specific to your OSSF.

**KAREN CARROLL**  
Director  
Environmental Health

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**BRAZORIA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
111 E Locust Bldg A-29, Suite 270  
ANGLETON, TEXAS 77515

(979) 864-1600  
(979) 388-1600  
(281) 756-1600

**HOURS OF OPERATION:**

**MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY**  
8:00am-5:00pm

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**ON-SITE  
SEWAGE FACILITIES  
(Septic Systems)**

**RULES OF  
BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS  
FOR ON-SITE  
SEWAGE FACILITIES**

**INFORMATION  
GUIDE**



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH**  
**(979) 864-1600**  
**(979) 388-1600**  
**(281) 756-1600**