



Homeowner’s guide to permitted types of on-site sewage disposal systems within Douglas County, Kansas

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| Conventional septic tank- lateral field systems | <p>The most common type of septic system consists of a single, 1,000-gal- lon septic tank and a series of lateral-field trenches. In Douglas County, lateral trenches must be at least 36” wide and 27” to 39” deep. Conventional trenches are constructed of perforated PVC piping laid horizontally within a 15” deep bed of washed (dust-free) lateral rock. A newer type of construction consists of vaulted plastic chambers connected together for the length of the trench. Both systems distribute the wastewater until it is absorbed into the soil, and both systems are acceptable in Douglas County.</p> <p>The size of the lateral field depends upon the number of bedrooms and type of soil the system will be installed in. Systems installed in clay soils with slow percolation rates are required to be approximately 50 percent larger than those installed in soils which percolate more quickly. Con- ventional below-ground systems may not be used in areas where under- ground rock layers or high groundwater tables may interfere with their performance.</p> <p>Properties deeded after Oct. 10, 1997, are required to have at least three acres of land if a public water supply is provided, or five acres if a non-public water supply (private water well) is used, to obtain a septic system permit in Douglas County.</p> |
| Lagoon system | <p>Lagoon systems contain and evaporate wastewater in a "pond" rather than underground. Lagoons may be the most appropriate systems for larger households and those located in areas of slow-percolation soils. La- goons must be fenced, and usually require more maintenance (mowing, weeding, etc.) than is needed for conventional septic systems.</p> |
| Alternative systems | <p>If a site is unsuitable for either a conventional septic system or a lagoon, an alternative system may be used. Wisconsin Mounds (above-ground sys- tems) or sand filter systems (utilizing constructed filtration units to reduce the lateral field area required) may be used in soils containing substantial amounts of rock. Wisconsin Mounds may also be used in areas with high groundwater tables. Both of these systems have been used extensively in the United States. Both require a pumping system and are usually more expensive to construct and operate than conventional systems.</p> |
| Installer license required in Douglas County | <p>No person may install, construct, repair, or alter an on-site sewage manage- ment system in Douglas County without having first obtained an annual Installer License from the Health Department.</p> |

Please call the Health Department at **(785) 843-3060** to arrange a site evaluation if you have questions regarding which type of system(s) may be appropriate for your site. There is a consultation fee for the site evaluation.