

Pine County Septic Ordinance

As of April 1, 2014 Pine County's updated Septic Ordinance has been in effect. Since that date, there have been a lot of questions. Here are some "Frequently Asked Questions" about the new ordinance:

Q: Why did the County update their sewer ordinance?

A: It was required by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. If we did not update our ordinance, our state grants were in jeopardy, which help offset the county's costs (your taxes dollars!).

Q: Do I need to put in a new sewer soon?

A: Not necessarily, septic compliance inspections only happen with a "triggering event".

Triggering events are:

- Sale of the property for consideration over \$1,000,
- Changes in use of the property (residential to commercial use for example)
- Any permits within the shoreland jurisdiction
- When major repairs, modifications, or updates are made to an existing system,
- Any township or city permit to increase the number of bedrooms, or
- Any time a complaint is received.

Q: Do I need to install a mound system?

A: Not necessarily, the type of system that is installed depends on the type of soils present on your property. Only a licensed septic designer can tell you what type of system your soils will allow, and it's not always a mound system.

Q: What does a septic compliance inspection look for?

A: Compliance inspections look for three main items:

- 1) Is the septic tank water tight?
- 2) Is the system leeching to the surface?
- 3) Is there at least 2' or 3' (depending on when the system was installed) of dry soils between the bottom of the soil treatment area (drain field) and the mottled soil (water table)?

Q: I know my system is non-complaint, now what?

A: Unless you are looking at one of the "triggering events" for a compliance inspection stated above, you may continue to operate your system (and have it pumped). We encourage you to look at replacing it, as that is the best way to not only protect your health, your neighbor's health, but the environment. Pine County does have grants or no interest loans available for people to replace their septic systems. Contact 320-216-4220 for more information!

Q: If my system is found to be non-compliant, does that mean I can't sell my property until the new system is installed?

A: No, a property can still be sold with a non-compliant system however it will need to be fixed after the sale and it is up to the buyer and seller to come to agreement about who will be responsible.