

Sale or Transfer of Properties with a Septic System

Before a property with an on-site sewage system (septic system) is sold or transferred, Thurston County regulations require a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report issued by the Thurston County Health Department. The goal is to protect public health, to evaluate all septic systems, to identify and repair failing systems, and make records available to the public. This requirement went into effect **September 1, 2010**.

Steps to receive a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report

1. **Application:** Owners of properties being sold/transferred need to complete a Time of Transfer (Sale) Application and [pay the fee](#), see page 6 section C10 of the fee schedule. UNLESS:

- The sale/transfer is due to foreclosure, sheriff's sale, court-ordered transfer, gift, inheritance, or devise; OR
- The sale/transfer is due to sale of a condominium, apartment, or single mobile home unit in a mobile home park; OR
- The sale/transfer occurs before September 1, 2010.

Application Submittal: The application and supporting documents are to be mailed or submitted to the following location:

By Mail -

Thurston County Environmental Health
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Olympia WA 98502

In Person -

Permit Assistance Center
Monday thru Friday – 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Building 1, 2nd Floor

2. **Inspection:** All components of the septic system need to be inspected by a Thurston County certified pumper, monitoring specialist, or septic installer who completes the Time of Transfer (Sale) Sewage System Inspection Report, EXCEPT:
 - Property with a current Operational Certificate, which was renewed or issued less than 12 months before the property transfer application. Application and fees are still required, though an inspection and inspection report are not needed.
3. **Record Drawing:** If no record drawings (also called as-builts) are available, the on-site septic professional

who completes the inspection needs to complete and submit a sketch of all components of the septic system. Many records are available on-line at www.co.thurston.wa.us/wl-dspublic8/Welcome.aspx?dbid=0.

Look for links to septic permits, or fill out the request for record drawing & permit information. For record drawing information, call 360-754-3355 x7293 (TTY/TDD 711 or 1-800-833-6388).

4. **Pump Septic Tank and Pump Chamber:** The septic tank and pump chamber must be pumped by a Thurston County certified septic pumper who will complete the Septic Tank Pump and Service Report, UNLESS:
 - The septic tank and pump chamber was pumped less than 12 months before the property sale/transfer and the Septic Tank Pump and Service Report is on file with [OnlineRME](#) a web-based wastewater management reporting tool.
5. **Report Issued:** Upon receipt of a complete application, required reports, and payment of fee, the Health Department will evaluate the system and issue a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report (usually within a week). This report is valid for one year, unless any reported condition has materially changed.
6. **Repairs to on-site sewage (septic) system and need for an updated evaluation:** If the property owner corrects problems according to regulations and would like an evaluation report to reflect the corrections, the Department will re-issue the evaluation report.

A new application and [re-evaluation fee](#), see page 6 section C10 of fee schedule, is required.

Time of Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

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What happens if problems are identified?

Failing septic systems are a public health concern. If the on-site septic system is failing, the owner must immediately correct the problem. Common failures are sewage backing up into the building or surfacing on the ground or a cracked septic tank leaking sewage. If these problems are not corrected, a Notice of Violation can result.

Deficiencies that require attention but do not require immediate repair include missing or broken inlet/outlet baffles, malfunctioning pump, broken monitoring ports, clean-outs, or risers, as well as a system not properly sized for the number of bedrooms in the residence. (However, permits for changes to the structure or property, or operational certificates, if required, may be held up until deficiencies are corrected.)

Both major and minor problems will be noted on the evaluation report. If the property owner corrects problems according to regulations and would like an evaluation report to reflect the changes, a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report application can be resubmitted with a [re-evaluation fee](#), see page 6 section C10 of the fee schedule.

What types of repairs require a permit?

A sewage system repair permit is required to replace a drainfield or a tank. A repair permit is not required to repair or replace baffles or a pump.

Will the Health Department prohibit the sale of my property?

No, the Health Department has no right or intention to prohibit property sales. The goal is to protect public health and to provide information to parties involved in the sale or transfer of property. The evaluation report will include any notices of violations or deficiencies found during the inspection and record review.

What will the Time of Transfer Evaluation Report include?

- System Information – available in County Records
 - Type of system
 - Approved use
 - Approval Date
 - Installation Date
 - Record Drawing

- Status of septic system – based on inspection reports
 - Maintenance requirements
 - Actions needed to correct problems
- Compliance with Sanitary Code requirements
 - Example: Is an operational certificate required? Is it current?

Will my old septic system be required to be upgraded to meet current code?

If the on-site sewage system is failing, it will require a repair. If the on-site septic system is functioning properly, it will be allowed to continue in its current use.

Where do I submit my application and other documents?

By Mail -

Thurston County Environmental Health Division
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Olympia WA 98502

In Person -

Permit Assistance Center
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I have several on-site sewage (septic) systems on my property does each system need to go through the Time of Transfer Evaluation?

Yes, each on-site sewage system will need to go through the Time of Transfer Evaluation. Each system will require an application, [fee](#), see page 6 section C10 of the fee schedule, inspection report, pump and service report filed with OnlineRME unless they fall into one of the exceptions.

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Time of Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

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I just installed my system. Do I need to go through the Time of Transfer Evaluation?

- 1) In cases where a newly installed system (new construction or a repair) was completed **over** 12 months prior to Time of Transfer Application, **and**, the residence has remained vacant since the installation:
 - a. The County **will require an application** and **applicable fee**, see page 6 section C10 of the fee schedule and an **inspection report** filed with OnlineRME from an On Site Sewage System Professional certifying that the system has not been used since the time of installation. The County will not require the sewage tank(s) be pumped for this evaluation.
- 2) In cases where a newly installed system (new construction or a repair) was completed **within** the last 12 months prior to Time of Transfer Application:
 - a. The County **will require an application**. The County will not require a fee or inspection report to be filed with OnlineRME. The County will not require the sewage tank(s) be pumped for this evaluation.

NOTE: A new septic tank installed is considered new construction. An existing tank, to be considered a part of a repair, would need to have been pumped and evaluated by a Thurston County Certified Professional within one year of the Time of Transfer Application. Documentation in the form of a pump and service report must be filed with OnlineRME.

My home is connected to a large on-site sewage system that serves our entire subdivision. How do I go through the time of Transfer Evaluation?

If your residence is connected to a large on-site sewage system, (LOSS) you are not required to go through the Time of Transfer evaluation process. A large on-site sewage system is a septic system that has flows over three thousand five hundred (3,500) gallons per day at any common point. These sewage systems are regulated by the Washington State Department of Health (360) 236-3330.

To find out if you have a large on-site sewage system please call Thurston County Environmental Health at (360) 867-2673.

For more information about on-site septic systems, lists of on-site specialists certified in Thurston County, and forms, see our website: www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehoss or call 360-867-2673 (TTY/TDD 711 or 1-800-833-6388).

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