

On-site Sewage (OSS) Program Glossary for the Public Health Permit Center

This glossary explains the application types, common terms, and navigation tools you will see in the new Public Health Permit Center (PHPC) while navigating applications for the OSS program. It is designed to help you understand and use the new system with confidence

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Hint: You can use the Table of Contents to quickly navigate this document. Simply click on any section title in the Table of Contents, and it will take you directly to that section.

Application Types

Different applications are available depending on the type of work you are doing. You can search for the application type using the keywords provided or by using the first 1-2 words of the application name.

Hint: Click on the name of the application to be directed to the associated Appendix with information on what documentation is required for submittal.

Site Applications

Applications for new onsite sewage systems (OSS) or replacement systems. Additional information: [On-site sewage design application, process flow, and directions](#).

- [OSS Site Design - Replacement](#): For properties where the existing system has failed and must be replaced.
- [OSS Site Design - Replacement to Support an ADU](#): Expands or upgrades an existing system for an accessory dwelling unit.
- [OSS Site Design - Replacement to Support Remodel](#): Required when a remodel increases the number of bedrooms or kitchens, and a larger system is needed.

Keyword: replacement

- [OSS Site Design - Holding Tank](#): For properties where no other system type is feasible.

Keyword: holding

- [OSS Site Design - Vacant Parcel](#): For new development on an undeveloped lot. If selecting Vacant Parcel, there is no option to enter a temporary address or manually enter in an address.

Keyword: vacant

- [OSS Site Design - Commercial](#): For new or replacement systems serving commercial buildings.

Keywords: commercial property

- [OSS Site Design - Winter Water Table Review](#) (WWTR): A seasonal review required in certain soil and water conditions. Can be applied for as a stand-alone application, or as a Sub-Record of an existing site design.

Keyword: winter

Building Applications

Required before most building permits can be issued. These reviews ensure that projects will not harm an onsite sewage system. For detailed instructions on how to apply and required documentation, see Building Application guidance at [House or building remodels or expansions](#).

Available Building Applications include:

- [Minor Interior Remodel](#): Small remodels or additions (under 250 sq. ft.) with an approved OSS record drawing from 2000 or later.

Keyword: minor

- [Deck Construction](#): Allowed if an approved record drawing shows a designated reserve area.

Keyword: deck

- [New Building, No Plumbing, Approved OSS Record Drawing](#)
- [New Building, No Plumbing, Record Drawing w/o Reserve Area](#)
- [New Building, No Plumbing, Approved OSS Record Drawing](#)
- [New Building, Plumbing, Record Drawing w/o Reserve Area](#)
- [New Building, Plumbing, Approved Record Drawing](#)
- [New Building, Plumbing, No Approved Record Drawing](#)

See Building Application guidance at [Septic Applications, Forms, and Fees](#) for more details on application types and record drawings.

Keywords: new building

- [Conversion of Existing Structure](#): Changing a garage or shop into living space.

Keyword: conversion

- [Mobile Home Replacement w/ Approved Record Drawing](#)
- [Mobile Home Replacement: Replacing an existing mobile home](#)

Keywords: mobile home

See Building Application guidance at [House or building remodels or expansions](#) for more details on application types and record drawings.

Water Source Reviews

Should be applied for BEFORE a site application is submitted unless proposing to drill a new well on a vacant parcel, these applications can be applied for as a Sub-Record of the Site Application.

Applications for **new** or replacement wells:

- [Water Source Review - New Group A Well Site Review](#): Used when developing a new Group A well. King County does not approve new Group A water system designs and only does well site inspections. King County will provide a well site inspection report which may be used during the Washington State Department of Health's Groundwater Source Approval process.
- [Water Source Review - New Group B Well Site Review](#): Used when developing a new Group B well. King County does not approve new Group B water system designs and only does well site inspections. King County will provide a well site inspection report which may be

used during the Washington State Department of Health's Groundwater Source Approval process.

- [Water Source Review – Request to Drill a New Individual/Private Well](#): Used when a lot does not have a previously approved water source and connection to a Group A or Group B public water system is not possible.
- [Water Source Review - Replacement Individual/Private Well](#): Used when a lot has a previously approved individual/private water source that must be replaced and connection to a Group A or Group B public water system is not possible.

Applications for **existing** water supply:

- Water Source Review - Group B Water System Potable Water
- Water Source Review – Group A Water System Potable Water
- Water Source Review – Request to Use an Individual Well/Spring as Potable Water Source

NOTE: If proposing the use of a new or existing Group B water system to support a Site Application, it's recommended to apply for the Water Source Review at least three months in advance of the Site Application.

Subdivisions and Boundary Line Adjustments

Applications for new or adjusted property lines. Reviews vary depending on whether the property is served by a Group A or Group B water system, an individual well, or multiple water sources. Both preliminary and final reviews may be required. The following are preliminary applications:

- [Subdivision Served by Existing Group B Water System](#)
- [Subdivision Served by New Group B Water System](#)
- [Subdivision Served by Group A water system](#)
- [Subdivision Served by Individual Well](#)
- [Subdivision Served by Multiple Water Sources](#)

Keyword: subdivision

- [Boundary Line Adjustment Served by Existing Group B Water System](#)
- [Boundary Line Adjustment Served by New Group B Water System](#)
- [Boundary Line Adjustment Served by Group A water system](#)
- [Boundary Line Adjustment Served by Individual Well](#)
- [Boundary Line Adjustment Served by Multiple Water Sources](#)

Keyword: boundary

Miscellaneous Applications

- [Commercial-to-Commercial Change of Use](#): Existing commercial business proposing a change of use (i.e. restaurant proposing a change of menu, concept, or change of ownership).
- [Residential-to-Commercial Change of Use](#): Residential property proposing commercial business (i.e. changing the residence to a daycare or real estate office).

Keywords: change of use

- [Septic Tank Abandonment](#): Permanently removing a septic tank, seepage pit, cesspool, or other OSS wastewater tanks from service.

Keyword: abandon

- [Limited Repair Permit](#): OSS Locate to support minor repairs, detached structure sewer line connection to existing OSS with gravity flow, bypassing a portion of the drainfield, splitting serial into even distribution, replacing dispersal piping in gravity or pressure drainfield, drip repairs.
- [OSS Repair or Modification Permit](#): Repair or medication of an existing OSS, submitted by Master Installer.

Keyword: repair

- [OSS Installation Permit – Vault Toilet Only](#)

Keyword: vault

- **Time of Sale Inspection Waiver Request**: Request to waive King County's requirement obtain a time of sale inspection report. See [Public Health website](#) for eligibility criteria.

Keyword: waiver

Certification Applications

Certifications for individuals and businesses working in onsite sewage.

- **Master Installer Certification**
- **Associate Installer Certification**
- **Maintainer Certification**
- **OSS Pumper Business Certification**
- **Septic Pumper Employee Certification**
- **Liquid Waste Pumper/Hauler Business Certification**: For businesses pumping portable toilets, vessels, and other tanks that do not require a bond or contractor's license.
- **Liquid Waste Pumper/Hauler Employee Certification**: For employees of businesses pumping portable toilets, vessels, and other tanks that do not require a bond or contractor's license.

What Does Not Require a Permit

Some issues qualify as **Maintenance Issues** per BOH Title 13.08.2605. If you have an approved as-built or Time of Sale site sketch on file, the following may be repaired without a permit:

- Building sewer pipes (tightlines)
- Septic tank lids and risers
- Baffles
- Pumps and pump control floats
- Pipes between tanks or from tank to distribution box
- Drainfield inspection boxes and ports
- Distribution boxes
- Control panels and timers
- Components of proprietary treatment units (e.g., aerators, filters)
- UV disinfection units
- Jetting of pressure distribution pipes or PVC gravity pipes

Note that while minor repairs do not require a permit, they must be reported to OnlineRME within 5 business days. *Please remember that minor repairs of undocumented OSS are not allowed without a repair permit.* For more information please see the [OSS Repair Proposals, Permits, and Reporting](#) memo.

Terms

This glossary explains common terms you will see when using the King County Public Health Permit Center. It is designed to help applicants, and the public understand how permit and plan applications are tracked and processed.

Application: A request for review or approval submitted through the PHPC.

Case Number: A unique identifier assigned to inspections or sub-records within a larger permit or plan.

Certification: Required for individuals and businesses performing on-site sewage work. Includes expiration dates and renewal requirements. See [King County Certified Professionals](#).

Contact: A person or business listed on an application or record, such as the property owner, designer, or installer. Only contacts can view certain details linked to that record.

Delinquent Record Drawing (As-Built): A record drawing is considered delinquent if not submitted within 30 days after the pressure test.

Invoice: A bill issued for application or permit fees. Can be paid online through PHPC by *anyone* using the Record ID or Invoice ID of the application.

License: Professional certification issued by Public Health to onsite sewage professionals (e.g., pumper, maintainer, master/associate installers).

Operational Permit: A permit that allows continued operation of certain systems. These are not commonly used for onsite sewage in King County.

Permit: Authorization to perform work such as installing a septic system or abandoning a tank. In PHPC, OSS permits are either Installation Permits or Tank Abandonment Permits.

Permit/Plan Statuses: The stage or condition of an application as it moves through review.

- **Submitted:** The application has been received by the system but review has not yet started.
- **In Review:** The application is currently being reviewed by staff.
- **On Hold:** The application is on hold pending corrections/additional information. The reviewing inspector will reach out for additional information. Alternatively, you can find the required corrections by going to:
 1. Going to **My Work**
 2. Selecting **My Permits/Plans**

3. Clicking on the **Record ID** to view the Summary Screen

- **Approved:** The application has met all requirements and is authorized to move forward.

NOTE: Email your reviewer when submitting revisions after approval.

- **Issued:** The permit has been officially granted and work may begin.
- **Denied:** The application has not met requirements and will not move forward. In the future, permits will no longer be marked as “disapproved” but instead as “denied.”
- **As-Built:** The final record drawing/as-built has been approved and the system is ready for use.

Plan: A review process for development activities, such as site design, subdivision, or boundary line adjustment.

Permit Number: A unique identifier assigned to permit applications. This number is the Record ID and will vary by application type. Examples include:

- Installation Permits: OSS-PR-0000###-2025
- Tank Abandonment Permits: OSS-ABD-0000###-2025

Plan Number: A unique identifier assigned to a plan review applications. This number is the Record ID and will vary by application type. Examples include:

- Sites: OSS-SITE-0000###-2025
- Buildings: OSS-BLDG-0000###-2025
- Water Source Reviews: WAT-SOURCE-0000###-2025
- Subdivisions: OSS-SUB-0000###-2025
- Boundary Line Adjustments: OSS-BLA-0000###-2025

Record Drawing (As-Built): A drawing stamped by a licensed onsite sewage designer or engineer and approved by Public Health. Shows the location and details of the septic system in relation to the property.

Record ID: A **Record ID** is the unique tracking number assigned to every application submitted through the Public Health Permit Center (PHPC). It is how the system organizes and tracks your application from start to finish.

Record IDs can appear in different forms depending on the type of application:

- **Permit Number:** Used when the application results in a permit, such as an Onsite Sewage System Installation Permit or a Septic Tank Abandonment Permit.
- **Plan Number:** Used when the application is for a plan review, such as a site application, building application, water source review, or subdivision review.

In other words, all Permit Numbers and Plan Numbers are Record IDs, but they tell you what type of application you are looking at.

Reserve Area: A reserve area is an area approved for use by PHSKC for a replacement septic system area and is generally identified through the initial design/permitting process for an OSS with soil logs. Older systems may not have a reserve area identified, and in some situations, before a permit is approved, PHSKC may request you contact a licensed on-site designer or engineer to get a reserve area designated.

Sub-Record: A sub-record is a record created under a parent record. For example, an installation permit is a sub-record linked to a site application. For OSS Site Applications that will be proposing a newly drilled individual well, the Water Source Review should be applied for as a Sub-Record of the Site Application.

Basic Navigation

The PHPC has several tabs and menus that guide you to your account information, applications, permits, and other records. Below are the main navigation areas. For other high-level resources, see [How to Navigate the Permit Center](#).

Home

- **My Account:** Update your contact information, mailing address, or preferences. You can also view and pay invoices, manage associated businesses, and upload professional certifications.
- **Apply:** Start a new application for onsite sewage (OSS), plumbing, food programs, water recreation facilities, pet businesses, solid waste facilities, schools programs, or licenses. You can also view your application history.
- **Get Help:** Access training, resources, and instructions.
- **Submit Complaint or Inquiry:** Report unsafe food handling, rodent problems, or other environmental concerns.
- **Pay Invoice:** Pay or print an invoice by entering the invoice number.
- **View My Permits and Plans:** See your current permits and submitted plans.

Payment

Pay invoices or request a refund.

Dashboard

A snapshot of your activity. Shows submitted applications, plans under review, invoices, and anything that needs attention.

Help

Takes you to the same resource page as “Get Help.”

Apply

Another link to the application page, the same as under Home.

My Work

Used to find and view applications or permits associated with the logged in account. You must be added as a contact in the application to view the records here. Can be used by professionals such as on-site system designers, installers, and licensed maintenance providers to locate and track submissions.

- **My Invoices:** View, pay, or print invoices linked to your account.
- **My Permits:** See all permits you have applied for. Each record lists the permit number, address, status, and expiration date.
- **My Plans:** View submitted plans, such as site designs, building permits, or boundary line adjustments. Each record lists the plan number, address, status, and expiration date.
- **My Inspections:** View inspections linked to your plans or permits. Inspections are tied to a parent record (case number).
- **My Licenses:** View professional licenses linked to your account. Includes license status, expiration date, and renewal reminders.

Map

Interactive parcel map. Enter an address to find property details and begin an application.

Record Search

Search public records such as permits, plans, or code cases. Enter a record ID, keyword, or address. With a record ID, you can also pay an invoice without being listed as a contact.

Calendar

Filter by deadlines and events such as public hearings, inspections, holidays, and permit or license expirations.

Appendix: Documents Required for Site Applications

Required Document	All Site Design Submissions	Stub-out Release	Conditionally Required
Detailed Site Plans and Specifications	✓		
Soil Log Data	✓		
Hydraulic Calculations	✓		
Operations and Maintenance Agreement		✓	
Building Permit		✓	
Pre-Construction Meeting Confirmation		✓	
Recorded Covenants and Notice on Title and Easement		✓	
Critical Areas Designation			✓
Proof of Lot Segregation Date			✓
Easement Survey			✓
Draft Drainfield Easement Language			✓
Covenants			✓
Notice on Title			✓
Waiver Request Form			✓

Appendix: Documents Required for Building Applications

Shared Document	Minor Remodel (Approved As-Built)	Deck (Approved OSS Record Drawing)	Deck (No Approved OSS Record Drawing)	New Bldg, No Plumbing (Approved As-Built w/ Reserve)	New Bldg, No Plumbing (As-Built w/o Reserve)	New Bldg, No Plumbing (No As-Built)	New Bldg, Plumbing (Approved As-Built w/ Reserve)	New Bldg, Plumbing (As-Built w/o Reserve)	New Bldg, Plumbing (No As-Built)	Interior Remodel / Addition (Existing Footprint)
Approved As-Built	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Site Sketch / OSS Locate (Certified Maintainer)			✓			✓			✓	
Proposed Interior Floor Plan / Construction Diagrams				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Construction Plans for Deck			✓							
Existing & Proposed Site Plan Changes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Current Operation & Maintenance Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sewer Availability Certificate (if in an Urban zoned area. Must clearly state if property is within 200 feet of public sewer.)	±	±	±	±	±	±	±	±	±	±

✓ = Required | ± = May be Required | = Not required

Appendix: Documents Required for New Wells

\Required Document	New Group A Well Site	New Group B Well Site	New / Replacement Private Well	After Well Drilled
Critical Areas Designation Letter	✓	✓	✓	
Vicinity Map / Directions to Site	✓	✓	✓	
Certificate of Water Availability (if within Group A service area)	✓	✓	✓	
Plot Plan	✓	✓	✓	
Draft Protective Covenants	✓	✓	✓	
Ecology Well Report				✓
Documentation of 2-Hour Pump Test				✓
Water Quality Samples (2 coliform – bacteria absent, 1 nitrate, 1 arsenic)				✓
Recorded Well Covenants				✓

NOTE: If in an existing Group A service area, to be eligible for an individual private well, the Certificate of Water Availability and/or accompanying letter from the utility must clearly indicate that water service is not available to the property.

Appendix: Documents Required for Subdivisions

Required Document	Group A	Existing Group B	Individual Well	New Group B	Multiple Water Sources	May be Required for Final OSS Review
Critical Areas Designation Letter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Preliminary Site Design Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Final Site Design Plan						✓
Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vicinity Map / Directions to Site	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Approval of Water System		✓				
Certificate of Water Availability						✓
Recorded Declaration of Well Covenant(s)		✓				✓
Draft/Recorded Declaration of Well Covenant			✓	✓	✓	
Well Use Agreement		✓				✓
DOE Well Log(s)						✓
DOH Approval to Operate						✓
Water Quality Results						✓
Water Quantity Results						✓

Appendix: Documents Required for Boundary Line Adjustments

Preliminary Submittal Requirements

Document	Group A	Group B (New)	Group B (Existing or Expanding)	Individual Well	Multiple Water Sources	Notes
Vicinity Map / Directions to Site	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Always required.
Certificate of Water Availability	✓	✓	✓		✓	For Group A: Must be valid within 12 months. If there are no vacant parcels, a water bill will be sufficient.
Certificate of Sewer Availability	±	±	±	±	±	If located in a Urban zoned area. Must state whether the property is within 200-ft of public sewer.
Copy of Well Source Site Review Letter		✓		✓	✓	Only for new wells.
Draft/Recorded Declaration of Well Covenant(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Recorded if existing, Draft if proposed.
Draft/Recorded Restrictive Well Covenant(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Preliminary Site Design Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Must include lot lines, easements, and OSS locations.
Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Existing Septic System Design & Record Drawing	±	±	±	±	±	Required if an existing OSS serves the parcel.

✓ = Required | ± = May be Required | = Not required

Final Submittal Requirements

Document	Group A	Group B (New)	Group B (Existing)	Individual Well	Multiple Water Sources	Notes
Vicinity Map / Directions to Site	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Always required.
Certificate of Water Availability	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Certificate of Sewer Availability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	If located in a Urban zoned area. Must state whether the property is within 200-ft of public sewer.
Final Site Design Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Must reflect approved final configuration.
Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Must include legal description and plat boundaries.
Revised Plat Map	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Include updated boundary and easement information.
Water Quality Results		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Water Quantity Results		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Recorded Declaration of Well Covenant(s)		✓	✓	✓	✓	Must be recorded prior to final approval.
DOE Well Logs		✓	✓	✓	✓	
DOH Approval to Operate		✓	✓			Required for Group B public water systems.
Copy of the Well Use Agreement		✓	✓	±	±	For shared wells or Group B systems.

✓ = Required | ± = May be Required | = Not required

Appendix: Documentation Required for Miscellaneous Applications

Required Document	WWTR	Commercial → Commercial	Residential → Commercial	OSS Limited Repair	OSS Repair / Modification	Vault Toilet Only
Detailed Site Plans and Specifications	✓			✓	✓	✓
Soil Log Data	✓					
Vicinity Map	✓					
Winter Water Table Monitoring Plan	✓					
Approved As-Built		✓	✓			
Current Operation & Maintenance Report (no deficiencies)		✓	✓			
Description of Business		✓	✓			
Existing and Proposed Site Plan Changes		✓	✓			
OSS Designer Waste Stream Determination		±	✓			
OnlineRME Report				✓	✓	

✓ = Required | ± = May be Required | = Not required