



Thurston County Environmental Health Division
Public Health & Social Services Department

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SALE OR TRANSFER OF PROPERTIES WITH A SEPTIC SYSTEM

Before a property with a septic system (on-site sewage system) is sold or transferred, Thurston County regulations require a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report be issued by Environmental Health. The goal is to protect public health by evaluating septic systems, identifying and repairing failing systems, locating unknown systems and making records available to the public. This requirement went into effect **September 1, 2010**.

TIME OF TRANSFER EVALUATION PROCESS

- INSPECTION:** All components of the septic system must be inspected by a Thurston County certified pumper, monitoring specialist, or installer. The inspection must be completed within twelve months prior to submitting the Time of Transfer Application.
- PUMPING:** All septic tanks and pump chambers must be pumped by a Thurston County certified pumper. Pumping must be completed within twelve months prior to submitting the Time of Transfer Application, unless verified at the time of inspection that the tanks have not been used since the time of installation.
- SKETCH:** If a record drawing (as-built) cannot be located, the septic professional must prepare a sketch of the septic system at the time of inspection on the form provided by the department, [On-site Septic System Sketch](#). The completed sketch must be submitted with the application. Records are available on-line at <https://weblink.co.thurston.wa.us/dspublic/customsearch.aspx?searchname=search> or by emailing EH_Tech@co.thurston.wa.us.
- OPERATIONAL CERTIFICATE:** If the septic system requires a renewable Operational Certificate (OPC), please verify the certificate is current with no outstanding fees prior to submitting the Time of Transfer Application. To check the status of your certificate please visit <https://www.co.thurston.wa.us/cm/permitting/permit-lookup.asp> or call 360-867-2626.
- APPLICATION SUBMITTAL:** A Time of Transfer Application must be submitted for each septic system prior to properties being sold or transferred. The application and applicable fee may be submitted as follows:

<u>EMAIL</u> permit@co.thurston.wa.us Follow-up email sent with link to pay fee online	<u>MAIL</u> Thurston County Environmental Health 3000 Pacific Avenue SE Olympia WA 98501	<u>IN PERSON</u> Building Development Center Monday - Friday 8 AM - 4 PM 3000 Pacific Avenue SE Olympia WA 98501
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- REPORT ISSUED:** Upon receipt of a complete application, required reports and fee, Environmental Health will evaluate the system and issue a Time of Transfer Evaluation Report. The report is valid for one year unless any reported conditions have materially changed.
- REPAIRS | REVISED REPORT:** If deficiencies noted in the issued report were corrected according to regulations, an updated report may be obtained by submitting a new application and resubmission fee, within twelve months of the previous report issue date. Upon evaluation, Environmental Health will issue an updated report reflecting the corrections.

8. **EXCEPTIONS:** A Time of Transfer Application is not required under the following circumstances:

- A new septic system (consisting of **both** sewage tank(s) **and** drainfield) installed **within the last (12) twelve months**, provided the newly installed system was permitted and approved by Thurston County Environmental Health. A newly installed septic tank or newly installed drain field by itself does not constitute a new septic system.
- The sale/transfer is due to a foreclosure (legal process in which the lender takes control of the property), sheriff's sale, court-ordered transfer, gift, inheritance or devise.
- The sale/transfer is for a single mobile home unit within a mobile home park.
- A STEP (Septic Tank Effluent Pump) system served by a city sewer system.
- The system is a large on-site sewage system (LOSS), which has wastewater flows greater than 3,500 gallons per day at any common point and is regulated by Washington State Department of Health, 360-236-3330.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens if deficiencies are identified?

Failing septic systems are a public health concern. If the septic system is found to be failing, it must be immediately addressed. Common failures include sewage backing up into the building, sewage surfacing on the ground, or a leaking sewage tank. Environmental Health's Compliance Section will follow-up on any system found to be in failure, which could result in a Notice of Violation.

Deficiencies that require attention but do not require immediate repair include, but are not limited to, missing or broken inlet/outlet baffles, malfunctioning pumps, broken monitoring ports, clean-outs, or risers, and systems not properly sized for the number of bedrooms within the residence. However, permit applications or required Operational Certificates may be held until deficiencies are corrected.

Both major and minor deficiencies, as defined in Article IV of the Sanitary Code, will be noted on the Evaluation Report. If the problems are corrected according to regulations, a new Time of Transfer Application can be submitted within twelve months of the previous report issue date with the applicable fee, and an updated report will be issued.

What types of repairs require a permit?

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

Will Thurston County Environmental Health prohibit the sale of my property?

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

I have more than one septic system on my property. Is a Time of Transfer Application required for each septic system?

Yes, each individual septic system requires a complete application, required reports, and applicable fee.

For more information, including lists of septic system professionals certified in Thurston County, please visit our website at <https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/departments/public-health-and-social-services/environmental-health/septic-systems>