Area to replace the OSDS in the future is also a consideration. Lots created since the mid-1970's were required to identify septic repair area. Where this has been compromised by grading, construction, or other activities, it may have to be re-established through a process involving excavating and evaluating the suitability of the soils – A licensed land surveyor is generally required for this process.

All deficiencies identified during the Health Department review must be corrected. These could have to do with system function (failing systems must be corrected or replaced) or with code deficiencies (e.g., installing a manhole riser for access to the septic tank). The latter may be waived in the case of hardships as described above under well issues.

**Health Department Site Visit**

As part of our review, we will conduct a site visit to evaluate the condition of the existing well and OSDS. Having these systems and the proposed project clearly staked will expedite this part of the process.

## Types of rebuilds/replacements

There are generally two types of rebuilds/ replacements. In the first, you are replacing an existing house on the original footprint with the same number of bedrooms. This may be due to fire damage, structural deficiencies, or simply a desire to modernize. We will refer to these as "same with same rebuilds." In all other cases, the house is being replaced with a house that does not meet the two criteria listed above. It may extend beyond the original footprint, be built in a different location on the property, or have additional bedrooms. These we will refer to as "same with different rebuilds."

**Same with same rebuilds**

Provided there are no deficiencies with well or septic and the house was occupied within the last three years, these should be processed by our office very quickly. If there are deficiencies, our office will work with you to develop a plan to address them. Certain deficiencies must be addressed prior to our approval of the building permit. These might include a failing OSDS or a substandard well. Others may be made a condition of Use and Occupancy. Examples are upgrading a drilled well that meets all other well construction standards or adding a riser to a septic tank.

**Same with different rebuilds**

Replacing a house beyond the footprint of or in a different location than the original house or with additional bedrooms raises other Health Department issues. In addition to evaluating the suitability of the existing well or OSDS, we must evaluate the impact the new layout will have on the existing well and OSDS and on the availability of septic repair area. Depending on where or what you wish to rebuild, a new well or OSDS may be required or sewage disposal area must be established.

## Use and Occupancy Requirements

Where an OSDS has been installed or modified, the system must receive a satisfactory final inspection by the Health Department. All associated electrical work must be inspected and approved by the County Permits office.

An approved final well inspection and satisfactory water samples for all required parameters are also required.

An itemized list of all Health Department Building Permit and Use and Occupancy requirements is available.

# Carroll County Health Department

### Bureau of Environmental Health

## Building Permits for Building or Rebuilding a Home on Private Well and/or Septic

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.


**Telephone:** 410-876-1884
**Toll free:** 800-966-3877
**Fax:** 410-876-4430

carrollcounty.environmental@maryland.gov

## Background

The purpose of this guidance is communicate the regulatory and policy requirements involved in the Health Department review of a building permit for building or rebuilding a home on private well and/or septic. The first part will cover new homes on raw land and second part will address home rebuilds where an older home is being replaced. The same principle applies to all situations – Before the Health Department can sign any building permit, we must essentially certify that the proposed house will be served by an adequate water supply, septic system – now referred to as an on-site sewage disposal system (OSDS), and, in most cases, that there is adequate area to replace the OSDS in the future. Use and Occupancy requirements for all house projects are in the final section of this brochure.

## New homes

When the Health Department receives a building permit for a new home, State regulations require us to consider the following three questions:

1. Does the well meet State construction and yield requirements? We will review the well completion report submitted by the well driller to answer this.
2. Is the OSDS the correct size for the number of bedrooms proposed? For this, we review the OSDS permit that must be issued before a building permit is signed.
3. Is there enough approved sewage disposal area to install one or two replacement OSDS's based on requirements in place at the time the lot was recorded? There should be a plan prepared by a licensed land surveyor addressing this.

If all three questions can be answered affirmatively, the building permit should be signed. If there are deficiencies, they must be addressed.

## Vacated Homes

Our office will handle homes that have been vacated for more than three years as a new home. Where the home was vacated less than three year, it will be handled as a home rebuild. If there were extenuating circumstances that delayed the project, our office can consider a variance to the three-year requirement for up to seven years. A variance request with detailed reasons must be submitted by the owner. It must be reviewed and approved by both our office and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

Date of last occupancy must be substantiated with appropriate documentation. Typically, this will take the form of utility bills. Absent that we may consider other forms such as street views from mapping software and possibly notarized testimony from neighbors.

## Home rebuilds

A number of factors such as the information known about the well and OSDS and the date a home was last occupied will determine how simple or complex the review process will be. This guidance will cover those factors first and then specific scenarios.

### Wells

If the well was drilled sometime after 1960, it should have been drilled under a permit which means there should be detailed information on its construction. Our office will review this information as well as any available water sample paperwork. In rare cases, this information may indicate that the well does not meet the standards of a modern well.

For wells lacking permit information, it may be necessary to have the well evaluated by a licensed well professional and water samples collected by a certified water sample collector and analyzed by a State-licensed water testing laboratory.

Generally, all deficiencies must be addressed. Wells in pits with adequate well casing and safe water samples must be upgraded by a licensed well driller to meet current construction requirements – Proposed upgrades must be reviewed and approved by the Health Department prior to being completed.

Wells must be capped with a properly installed sealed and vented well cap. Unless you are qualified to work with electrical lines and handy at mechanical work, it is best to hire a qualified professional to take care of this.

Where the well tag indicating the State well permit number is missing, it must be replaced by a licensed well professional – Replacement well tags can be ordered at the Health Department for a fee of $5. The new tag must be picked up and attached to the well casing by your well driller.

Some of the above requirements may be waived in the case of hardship such as rebuilding a house to the existing footprint due to destruction by fire. In those cases, the Health Department will review the deficiencies with you and recommend corrective measures and notify you of any available loan/grant assistance programs.

### OSDSs

As with wells, the first step will be to review any existing OSDS permit files. A key piece of information from the permit is the number of bedrooms for which a system was designed. This will determine how many bedrooms may be included in the rebuild or remodel. Where there is no permit information, we can consider specifications of the existing system provided by a licensed septic installer. Additional evaluation of the soil may be required in these situations in order to determine risk of failure to the surface or to groundwater.