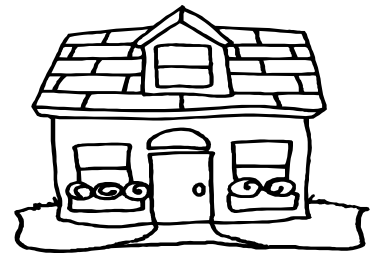




Kendall County Health Department
Environmental Health Unit
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BUILDING A HOME

If you are planning to build a home that will not be located on or near a centralized wastewater collection system, **a site evaluation should be conducted prior to purchasing property.** It will be up to you, the potential land purchaser, to have the land evaluated to be certain the property can be “developed” (i.e., it is conducive to a private sewage disposal system, more commonly referred to as a septic system).

There are some very important aspects of the property that a site evaluation should consider. The size of the lot is important for determining the ideal location of the wastewater treatment and dispersal system. The land area and location of the onsite system must meet the required horizontal separation distances (the regulated distance from adjacent properties, water wells, and surface water bodies). In addition to the size of the property, another and quite possibly more important component that needs to be evaluated is the soil.

Soil characteristics play a major role in siting a private sewage disposal system. It is important to know the site conditions before purchasing the land. If site conditions are unacceptable for a septic system, chances are you will be stuck with property that you cannot build upon.

For example, imagine that you purchased a parcel of land with a great view or that seems ideal for your particular needs, but the soil conditions don't meet specified requirements for wastewater dispersal. The physical site characteristics must be evaluated to ensure that the soil can handle the amount and quality of effluent being discharged. These characteristics include soil classification or percolation tests; vertical separation (subsurface) distances to restrictive horizons, such as bedrock; the natural groundwater table; and the seasonal high water table. If these conditions are not acceptable and do not meet the requirements established by your local or state regulatory authority, you will want to know this prior to making any commitment to purchasing the property.

If any of these site characteristics cannot be met, all may not be lost. There are alternative methods for onsite wastewater treatment and disposal. It is vital, however, to work closely with local regulatory authorities because they will be able to provide you with options that would be approved for your site's conditions.

Again, it is the purchaser's responsibility to schedule a site evaluation. The Kendall County Environment Health Unit can provide you with contacts for a licensed inspector or soil evaluator. If the site meets the requirements and can be developed, it is also important to contact a reputable septic installer or designer. You may also check the local yellow pages or ask questions of others living in the area to help determine who would be most appropriate to perform your site evaluation and/or design and install your septic system. The designer or installer, in cooperation with the Health Department, can help you determine which wastewater treatment and dispersal technology will be appropriate for your site.

Once you become the proud new owner of an onsite wastewater treatment and dispersal system, you need to take care of your new investment. Knowing the location of the system and understanding how the system and its components work are very important to you as the new homeowner. Proper maintenance and care of your onsite system will ensure that your wastewater is properly treated and safely returned to the environment. It is also important for you, the purchaser, to be present when all of these inspections are conducted. This will provide you the opportunity to ask questions and have a full understanding of your wastewater treatment and dispersal system. **The Kendall County Health Department, Environmental Health Unit, can be reached at (630) 553-9100, ext. 8026, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.**