



# Wastewater System Guidelines for Homeowners

## Buying Land or Residential Property Info Sheet

Goal: Assistance for someone looking to buy raw land or an existing house. Information that should be determined about the need for wastewater system or issues related to their existing wastewater system.

1. Is the property currently connected to a municipal or private sewer system? If not, but sewer service is available, will you be required to connect?
2. Will the property require installation of an onsite wastewater system? If yes, your offer could include a contingency requiring a Site/Soil Evaluation to determine whether site conditions are acceptable for a conventional system. If an alternative system is required, investigate costs and options.
3. Does the property have an existing onsite wastewater system? If yes, sellers are required to perform a transfer inspection to determine the system's operational status. Although the person selling an onsite system is required to have it inspected as part of the transaction, this is often not done until an offer has been made and an escrow account set up. To determine the condition of the system prior to making an offer, you may need to ask the seller to have the transfer inspection done before making your offer. NOTE: For some bank-owned property transactions, the inspection may be the responsibility of the buyer.
4. If buying a residential property with an onsite wastewater system, do you intend to remodel or expand the home? If you plan to add a bedroom (or convert an existing room to a bedroom, consult with the appropriate county agency to obtain records and potentially consult with a professional to determine if the existing system is adequate or whether it may need to be expanded or replaced.
5. If you want a preliminary assessment, hiring a qualified septic contractor, designer, inspector, or engineer may provide a preliminary assessment of the on-site system – whether it is a new system or an existing system.
6. Are there any plans for the property to be connected to a sewer system? If yes, you may want to verify when, and what are the hookup fees? Contact the sewer provider for details.
7. Site Limitations: see AzOWRA's **Site Investigation** Info Sheet for information about site constraints related to onsite wastewater systems.
8. Transfer Inspection: see AzOWRA's **Transfer Inspection** Info Sheet.