

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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**SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
GENERAL GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM # 21  
REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFYING AND/OR UPGRADING EXISTING SEWAGE  
DISPOSAL AND WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS ON PROPOSED  
REALTY SUBDIVISIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS**

**Authority**

The Suffolk County Sanitary Code sets forth requirements for approval of water supply and sewage disposal systems. The statutory authority for these guidelines can be found in Article 6, Section 760-602, 603 and 609 of the Suffolk County Sanitary Code.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this guideline is to assist staff in determining when any existing building(s) located on a proposed Realty Subdivision or Development must have sewage disposal and water supply facilities upgraded in conformance with the current standards and requirements of the Department.

**Guidance**

This procedure may be divided into two main categories: Sewage disposal systems, and water supply systems.

A) Sewage Disposal

- 1) When public sewers are available, all existing and proposed buildings will be required to be connected to the sewer system.
- 2) When private septic systems are utilized, an existing septic system may be deemed acceptable to the Department if so certified by a licensed design professional on SCDHS form WWM-072 or WWM-084, as appropriate. In no case will an existing system be acceptable without at least a precast concrete septic tank and leaching pool – single cesspool systems and/or block structures will not be accepted. Certifications MUST include the sizes and construction types of all structures. Sanitary systems will not be acceptable if located under driveways or other paved areas unless they are certified to be traffic bearing. In the case where the Department has issued a Final Approval for an existing system within the last 5 years, the requirement for certification can be waived and the system deemed acceptable, at the discretion of the reviewer.

When it has been determined that a new septic system is required for an existing building, a formal application, including regular processing fee, will be required. The system will be required to meet all current Department standards, with the following exceptions:

- a) In areas where existing private wells are present, every attempt shall be made to meet the current required separation distances between existing wells and replacement systems. When this is not possible, the Department will consider lesser setbacks; however, the new separation distances should not be less than previously existed, and should be maximized to the extent possible.
- b) In situations where the existing system is located in the rear yard, every attempt shall be made to locate the new system in the front yard or other accessible area, as required by standards. The Department will consider other locations if it is demonstrated that existing building plumbing and construction make it impossible to locate the new system according to current standards.

Satisfactory installation of the new system and issuance of a Final Approval for the system shall be required before approval of the proposed subdivision maps.

## B) Water Supply

- 1) When public water is available, all existing and proposed buildings will be required to connect to the public water system.
  - a) When existing buildings are presently utilizing private wells and water mains are in existence at the site, the buildings should be connected to public water, the wells abandoned, and tap letters submitted prior to approval of the map. If the owner requests to be allowed to continue using the existing wells, and the proposed lots are at least 40,000 sf in area, the Department may grant the request, provided that covenants are filed stating that there shall be no conveyance of the parcels with the existing buildings unless they have been connected to public water and the existing wells properly abandoned.
  - b) When a main extension is required for public water to be available to existing and proposed buildings, in addition to any standard public water extension covenants, language will also be included stating that there shall be no conveyance of the parcels with the existing buildings unless the buildings have been connected to public water and the existing wells properly abandoned.
- 2) When public water is not available, an existing private well may be deemed acceptable to the Department if so certified by a licensed design professional on SCDHS form WWM-072 or WWM-084, as appropriate. Certifications MUST include a recent (no more than 1 year old) water analysis. Wells located within existing buildings will not be accepted. In the case where the Department has issued a Final Approval for an existing water supply within the last 5 years, if a recent water analysis demonstrating water quality meeting current standards is submitted or on file, the requirement for certification can be waived and the water supply deemed acceptable, at the discretion of the reviewer.

When it has been determined that a new private well is required for an existing building, the well will be required to meet all current Department standards, with the following exception:

- a) Every attempt shall be made to meet the current required separation distances between the sanitary systems and the new well. When this is not possible, the Department will consider lesser setbacks; however, the new separation distances should not be less than previously existed, and should be maximized to the extent possible.

Satisfactory installation of the new well, submission of a well driller's certificate and an acceptable water quality analysis, and issuance of a Final Approval shall be required before approval of the proposed subdivision maps.

C) Exceptions

- 1) If the Department has determined that a proposed development map is exempt from the requirements of Article 6, the existing water supply and sewage disposal facilities for any existing buildings need not be upgraded provided that the facilities for any such buildings are located solely on the lots being created for those buildings.
- 2) In cases where a 'lot line change' is proposed and no additional building lots are being created in the process, the existing water supply and sewage disposal facilities for any existing buildings need not be upgraded provided that the facilities for any such buildings are located solely on the lots being created for those buildings. However, if the proposed lot configuration(s) are insufficient for possible future installation of systems meeting Department standards, due to insufficient area, setbacks, depth to groundwater, etc., then a variance from the Board of Review will be required for the land division, and possible system upgrade requirements will be addressed by the Board.
- 3) In cases where the proposed subdivision or development is simply to create new property lines between existing buildings, with no new construction proposed, and the resulting lots meet the minimum lot area requirements of Article 6, the existing water supply and sewage disposal facilities need not be upgraded provided that the facilities for each building are located solely on the lot being created for that building. However, if the proposed lot configuration(s) are insufficient for possible future installation of systems meeting Department standards, due to insufficient area, setbacks, depth to groundwater, etc., then a variance from the Board of Review will be required for the land division, and possible system upgrade requirements will be addressed by the Board.

**Effective**

This document is for guidance purposes only and becomes effective for applications received after the date of this memorandum. This document should apply in most cases, but it is not a standard and is not meant to substitute for the discretion and common sense of the reviewing engineer.

Issued by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Walter J. Hilbert, P.E., Chief  
Office of Wastewater Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_