

OSSF Permitting Process

The process for obtaining a permit for an OSSF in Bell County is dependent on a number of factors. Please see our process model to aid in understanding the steps that need to be taken.

On- Site Sewage Facilities

Some properties in our city do not have access to our city sewer system. These properties must utilize on-site sewage disposal. Furthermore, some existing homes and businesses have on-site sewage facilities (OSSF) serving their disposal needs in areas where city service is now available. In either case, when an OSSF is utilized to treat and dispose waste water, the Bell County Public Health District permits and regulates these activities.

The treatment and disposal of sewage through an OSSF can be a limiting factor on how a home or commercial facility is operated. An OSSF is designed for a peak daily flow of sewage. Sizing for treatment in a septic tank or an aerobic treatment unit (ATU) is established based on state averages or specific estimates for your particular facility. High flows on a single day of a week can cause issues even though a weekly or monthly flow may not appear excessive. These surges not only effect the treatment in the septic tank or ATU but it also effects the disposal associated with your OSSF.

Disposal occurs on the property the structure is located on. The size and type of disposal is based on multiple factors specific to the site. Soil type, rock, topography, trees, setbacks, easements and surface improvements determine locations on your property that are suitable for sewage disposal. Disposal occurs by uniformly applying the treated effluent into or onto the suitable area. The minimum required area varies based on the type of disposal selected and the permitted daily flow of the system. In some cases the disposal area needed is two or three times the size of the home or business.

To insure the OSSF can function as designed and permitted, the dedicated area must be protected. No additional construction or surface improvements can occur in the permitted area. The area must be vegetated to facilitate proper treatment and disposal through percolation, evaporation and transpiration or plant growth.

To obtain information for proper maintenance and operation of your system or for further information specific to your existing or proposed OSSF, please contact the Bell County Public Health District at (254) 778.7557.