The Corporation of The

Town of Amherstburg

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

3295 Meloche Road
Amherstburg, Ontario N9V 2Y9
Phone: 519-736-5408 Email: building@amherstburg.ca
https://www.amherstburg.ca/en/town-hall/building-applications-permits.aspx

RESIDENTIAL SEWAGE SEPIC SYSTEMS PERMIT INFORMATION PACKAGE

Version: 2026

1. Welcome to The Town of Amherstburg

The Town of Amherstburg is a growing historical community. It is one of the oldest picturesque towns in Southwestern Ontario. It's nestled on the shores of Lake Erie and the Detroit River. The Town of Amherstburg is committed to delivering cost-effective and efficient services for residents, with a view to improving and enhancing their quality of life.

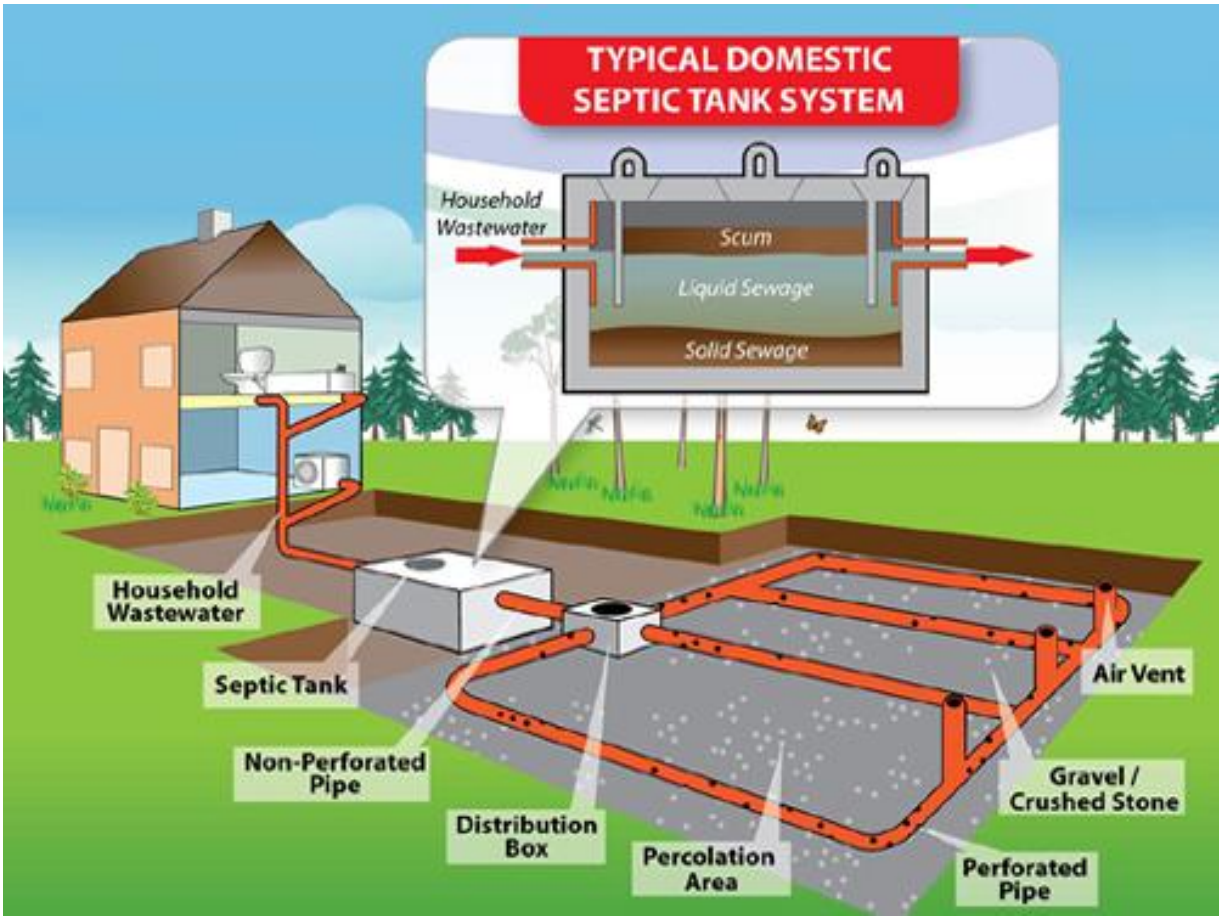
The Building Department is responsible for the enforcement of the Ontario Building Code, By-Laws and the Municipal Act.

2. What is a Septic System?

The Town of Amherstburg consists of urban and rural properties. Sanitary sewers typically handle all sewage from urban properties. In rural areas, many properties are not connected to municipal sanitary services. They must provide their own wastewater treatment services right on their property using a sewage septic system.

3. How Does a Septic System Work?

A traditional septic system has three main components. It consists of **a septic tank, distribution pipes and the leaching bed.**

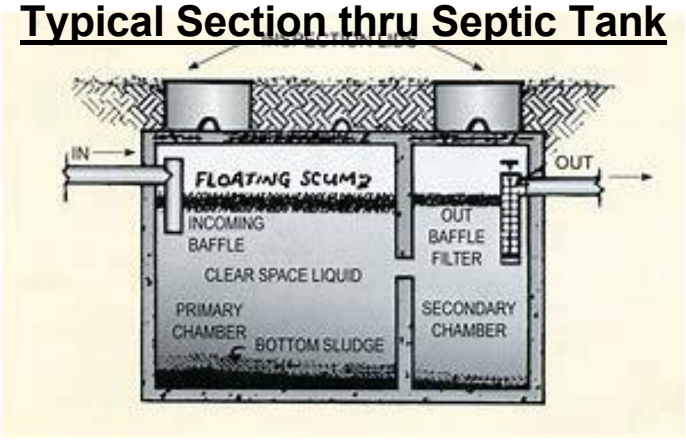


The **septic tank** is comprised of a reservoir with two chambers buried on your property. The reservoir depends on the needs of the house involved. The first chamber separates the solids from the liquids through decantation. Heavier solids settle to the bottom of the reservoir and become sludge while greases and fats, called scum, float to the surface. The second chamber contains water with fewer solids that is evacuated towards the distribution pipe and eventually to the leaching bed. Emptying the tank every two years is recommended to ensure proper function of the leaching bed.

The **distribution pipes** or leaching chambers are a system of pipes leading from the septic tank to the leaching bed. This may include a distribution chamber to direst wastewater evenly to various parts of the leaching bed. Traditional systems use gravity, but some sites use pumps to move water uphill from the septic tank.

Liquids slowly run off towards the leaching bed from the tank's second chamber. A **typical leaching bed** is an arrangement of connected pipes with holes along the sides and bottom surrounded by gravel. Soil filtering material must allow the wastewater to drain away slowly enough that contaminants are filtered out, but also quickly enough that the bed does not fill up in most instances. Some wastewater in the soil gets taken up by grass roots and evaporation.

Typical Section thru Septic Tank



Types of Leaching Beds

- **Conventional bed**: used where the natural soils are suitable filter material and the ground is well drained. The leaching bed pipes are laid in stone filled trenches below normal ground level.

- **Raised Bed**: used where natural soils are not suitable filter materials, or the site has a high-water table, or bedrock is close to the surface. Soil is brought to the site to create a leaching bed that is high enough above the underground water table or bedrock. The leaching beds are laid in stone filled trenches in the imported soils. This system requires a large area of soil downstream from the bed (in direction the wastewater will flow as it seeps through the soil) This is called the “mantle” and is an important part of the soil filter.

- **Filter Bed**: used where a smaller bed area is required due to site conditions or lot size. Instead of trenches the whole area is excavated and filled with a layer of filter sand. A Layer of stone is placed on top of the sand and pipes are laid into it. This system can be installed in ground, partially raised or fully raised and may also use a mantle.

- **Shallow Buried Trench:** used where a smaller bed area is required. This system can only be used with a “Level IV treatment unit” which provides more treatment than a traditional septic tank. Filtered wastewater is pumped under pressure through perforated pipes, which gets sprayed into specially designed pipe chambers to spread the wastewater evenly over the trenches. This requires additional maintenance as well an annual inspection and testing.

4. Who should apply for a permit?

It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that a septic permit is obtained. You may authorize your contractor to apply for the permit, however as the owner, ensure that a permit is in place prior to commencement of work. The owner should also verify that all work, inspections and all permits are complete prior to finalizing any contracts.

5. How long does it take to get my permit and when can I start?

Septic permits are usually issued within 10 business days of a complete application being submitted. All other approvals are required (eg: ERCA, Essex County Roads, ETC), for an application to be considered complete. Applications that are incomplete because of missing or incorrect information will be delayed. **No work can commence** until the permit has been issued and all fees have been paid.

6. What is required for a Sewage Septic System Permit

The Town of Amherstburg currently uses an online permit submission portal called Cloudpermit. All applications will require to be completed online using Cloudpermit. Visit our website www.amherstburg.ca/building or log onto https://ca.cloudpermit.com to create an account. With this online system, it will allow you to complete the entire building permit process from anywhere at any time. All drawings will be required to be completed by a certified designer. All drawings shall be a minimum scale as indicated. The following drawings are required.

For new residential dwellings to be constructed, the design of the septic sewage system is required to be submitted as a separate permit in Cloudpermit and should be submitted at the same time. One submission for the dwelling and one submission for the septic system. The building permit and septic permit is issued at the same time. ERCA approval may be required prior to any issuance of a septic permit.

If an existing home is subject to an extension (addition), alteration, or repair, the system may need an evaluation to determine if the system needs to be upgraded. A septic evaluation may be required to be submitted at the time of application submission.

To determine if a septic system upgrade is needed, you should be asking the following questions.

1) Has the number of bedrooms increased?
2) Does the extension exceed 15% of the existing finished floor area? or,
3) Are there any new plumbing fixtures added?

If any of the three items apply, a septic system upgrade may be required. This is due to a higher daily design load.

A septic Evaluation will be required to be submitted. Download our septic evaluation for existing system and upload as part of your application.

7. Checklist for Septic Application Submissions

- ☐ Application to Construct or Demolish (Cloudpermit).
- ☐ Septic Drawings (Shall be scaled)
  - Site plan - Indicate location of dwelling unit(s), septic tank, leaching bed, well, water courses, driveways, easements, swimming pools and other buildings.
  - Section view - Provide section thru septic leaching bed (separation distances from rock, clay, water and etc.)
  - Grade Design (if applicable) – Illustrating the site elevations with all existing and proposed structures, swales, drains, etc.
- ☐ Schedule 1: Designer form.
- ☐ Schedule 2: Sewage System Installer Information
- ☐ Submit daily design calculations / fixture units.
- ☐ ERCA Approval (if required)
- ☐ Copy of imported soil report if using a raised bed
- ☐ If a raised bed is proposed, they must show the contact loading area dimensions for the bed with mantel.
- ☐ If using a Level IV treatment system, a copy of the CAN/BNQ 3680-600 certification and all components and size information is required, signed maintenance agreement will be required.

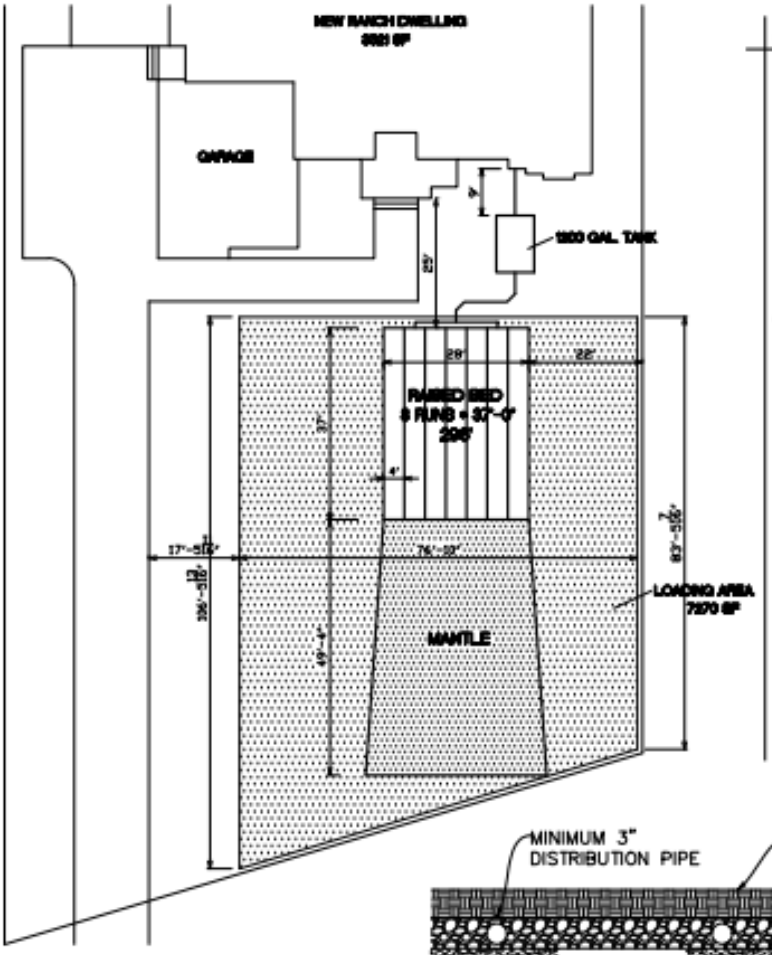
Please note that incomplete applications or plans will not be accepted.

8. What is the cost of a New Septic permit?

The following is list of fees for a Sewage Septic Systems

• New Installation or replacement (any type)	$975.00
• Holding Tanks	$975.00
• Repair or alteration to existing system	$288.00
• Decommissioning of septic system	$305.00
• Install of new lateral sanitary sewers	$305.00
• Indemnity Fee	$65.00
• Indemnity Deposit	$1000.00 (Refundable)

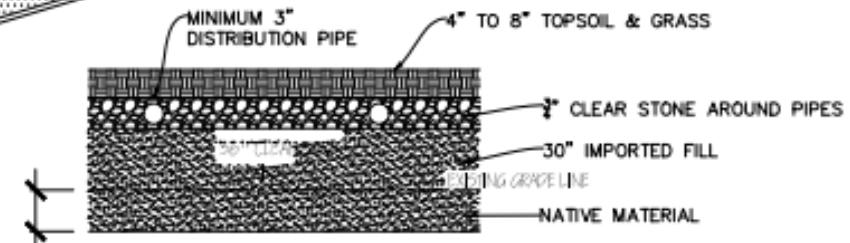
The indemnity deposits will be refunded following the final inspection. Final inspection will consist of final grading with seeding or grass. Septic permits must be finalized within 3 years of permit issuance to receive indemnity deposit refund.



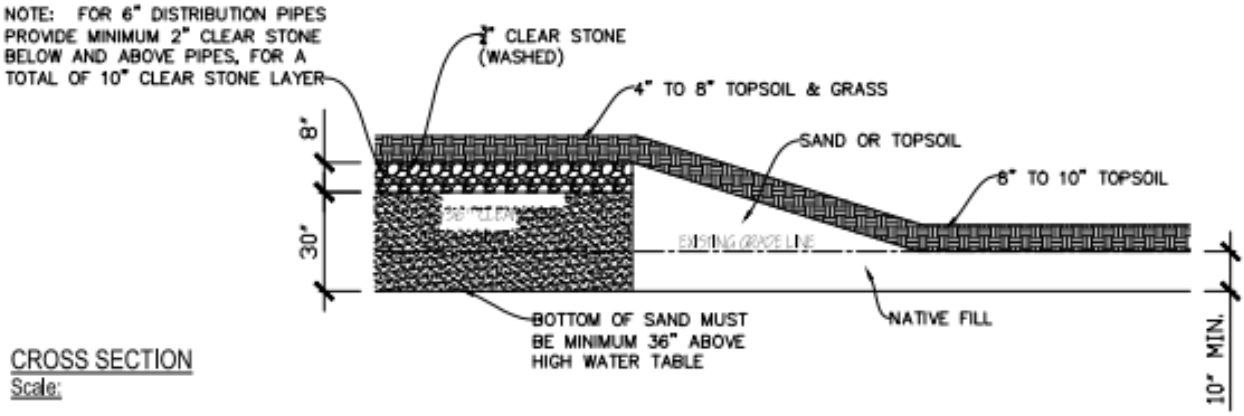
SITE PLAN
Scale:

SEPTIC BED NOTES:

- WEEPING BED TO BE CONSTRUCTED AS A RAISED BED
-GRAVITY FLOW TO TANK AND PUMP TO BED (IF REQUIRED)
- PLACE TRACER WIRE AROUND DISTRIBUTION BED
- BED TO BE LOCATED MINIMUM 10' FROM PROPERTY LINES
AND MINIMUM 16'-5" FROM STRUCTURES



CROSS SECTION
Scale:



CROSS SECTION
Scale:

SEPTIC SITE PLAN

ADDRESS: DATE:

TYPICAL SITE PLAN (drawing sample submission)

9. What inspections are required and how are they scheduled?

Requesting inspections is the responsibility of the homeowner and/or contractor of the project. It is their responsibility to ensure the work is complete and ready for the inspector. Any work covered up before the inspection must be uncovered for proper inspection. In addition to the above, the builder is responsible for providing the permit drawings on site at the time of the inspection.

Inspections can be requested through “Cloudpermit” and will require to be confirmed with our office. Please understand that the requested inspection time is not approved until the building dept. office accepts the inspection. The requested time may be different from the approved time. You can also schedule inspections by contacting our office at least 24 hours in advance at 519-736-5408. Inspections will be available between 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:15 pm to 3:30 pm.

Each major phase of construction must be inspected to verify the work conforms to the Ontario Building Code. The listed below are the mandatory inspections.

1. **Septic bed inspection**: before backfilling the following shall be inspected on site
    a. Sand.
    b. Stone.
    c. Pipe/Chambers.
    d. Locate wire (14GA wire) around system.
    e. Site soil testing report (if applicable).
    f. Electrical (if applicable).
    g. Pressure test (if applicable).

2. **Decommission of Septic System (if applicable**): Septic tank to be completely removed or pumped with certificate of work.

3. **Final Completion**: properly graded, final grass and electrical components (if applicable). Signed maintenance agreement for any secondary treatment systems will be required.

10. Maintaining your Sewage Septic System

Once your septic system is installed it is important that it be properly maintained and prevent contamination of ground water. It is recommended that you have your septic tank inspected and pumped out as needed every three to five years. How often you need to pump the solids out of the septic tank depends on three major factors:

- The number of people in your household.
- The amount of wastewater generated is based on the number of people in the household.
- The volume of solids in the wastewater.

Although your septic tank requires maintenance the leaching bed typically does not. However, you should adhere to the following rules to prolong its functional life.

- **Do not drive over the leaching bed with cars, trucks or heavy equipment,**
- **Do not plant trees or shrubbery in the leaching bed area, the roots can get into the lines and plug them,**
- **Do not cover the leaching bed with hard surface, such as concrete or asphalt. Grass is best cover, because it will help prevent erosion, and help remove excess water.**
- **Do divert surface runoff water from roofs, patios, driveways and other areas away from the absorption field.**
- **Have the tank pumped out every three to five years,**
- **Avoid excessive use of anti- bacterial soaps, bleaches and harsh cleaning products.**
- **Do not put paints, solvents, motor oil, pesticides and other toxic chemicals in your system. Use recycling or hazardous waste collection programs for these substances.**