

SEWAGE SYSTEMS

malfunctioning or illegal systems



What is an illegal system and how would I know?

An illegal sewage system is one that is installed or repaired without a building permit. A person must obtain a permit from the Health Unit to construct a new, or repair an existing, sewage system. Once a permit is issued, the Health Unit will inspect the system to ensure that it is properly installed.

Signs that a sewage system may be illegally installed include:

- installations during unusual times (i.e. evenings and weekends)
- no permit on display in the area where the sewage system is being installed
- installations that appear too close to a well, lake, river or stream
- the use of material that is not designed for sewage systems (i.e. drums, tanks, drainage tile, etc.)

Do all sewage systems need a building permit?

Under the *Ontario Building Code*, all sewage systems require a permit except class 1 systems. Class 1 systems include outhouses, chemical toilets, composting toilets, and portable privies.

What are the signs that a sewage system is malfunctioning?

Malfunctioning sewage systems should be reported to the Health Unit. Signs that a system is malfunctioning:

- sewage ponding on top of, or around, the septic tank
- soggy ground in the leaching bed area
- sewage on the ground in the area of the leaching bed
- a strong sewage smell
- frequent pumping of a septic tank by an owner

What do I do if I suspect that a sewage system in my area is not functioning properly or is being installed illegally?

If you suspect that a sewage system isn't working properly or is being installed without a permit:

- Call the Health Unit at 705.522.9200, ext. 464, to speak to a public health inspector.
- For sewage issues that require an immediate response after hours, during weekends or on public holidays, please call 705.688.4366.
- Report your observations and concerns to a public health inspector. Be prepared to provide the specific address of the location of the suspected malfunctioning or illegal sewage system, as well as details of the problem that you suspect exists at that address.

Complaints are investigated promptly to ensure that the sewage system is not discharging sewage onto a surface or into a waterway, to verify if the system is functioning properly, and to ensure that any installations or repairs are done with a permit and in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code*.

If I make a complaint will my name be revealed?

If you make a complaint to the Sudbury & District Health Unit, your personal information will not be provided to the owner or operator of the sewage system that you are concerned about. In the event that you do not wish to provide your name or contact information, the Health Unit will investigate your anonymous complaint.

For additional information, please call the Health Unit at 705.522.9200, ext. 398, or visit www.sdhu.com.

Sudbury & District Health Unit office locations:

Sudbury – Main Office
PH: 705.522.9200
Toll-Free: 1.866.522.9200

Chapleau
PH: 705.860.9200

Espanola
PH: 705.222.9202

Manitoulin Island
PH: 705.370.9200

Sudbury East
PH: 705.222.9201