

## **Health Department Requirements for Onsite Sewage Systems in Change of Use or New Non-residential Use Properties**

The Department of Professional Occupation and Regulation considers the following uses as non-residential or commercial: bed & breakfast, day care, event center, women's shelter, pre-school, salon, wayside stand, brewery, winery, tasting room, etc. The commercial aspect requires the involvement of a professional engineer (PE) for the evaluation and design services of an onsite sewage system (OSS).

### **Using an Existing OSS**

If you are going to use an existing OSS for the non-residential use, even if it is the same one used for your residence, a **waste flow characterization (WFC) from a PE** is needed. The WFC addresses the waste volume and waste strength of the proposed use and is used to determine if the existing system can handle the load.

- This is where you will decide and discuss with your PE, the number of guests, possible food services, daily uses, annual events, etc.; all will contribute to the waste load on the OSS.
- You will also need to decide where any private events will be held, and if associated wastes will go to an OSS, or if temporary portables will be used to provide both handwashing and restroom facilities.
- If the outcome of the WFC determines that the existing OSS will handle the proposed waste load, then a **safe, adequate, and proper (SAP) evaluation is to be performed**. The SAP evaluates the existing condition of the OSS components.
- If either the WFC or SAP determines that **expansion, modification, or repair of the existing OSS** is needed to handle the proposed use; a **permit will be required for such alterations**.

### **Installing a New OSS**

If a **new OSS** will be installed for the non-residential use, then a **design for an OSS construction permit by a PE is required**. You may consider using a previously approved drainfield site (if applicable) for this new install, or find a new site. The services of an **onsite soils evaluator (OSE) can be used to evaluate and identify a new drainfield site**, and can be used in consultation with your PE for the design of the new OSS.

### **Other Considerations: Potable Water Supply and Food Preparation**

For the potable water supply, the Health Department will provide you a **water system questionnaire**, which once completed, will be forwarded to the state Office of Drinking Water (ODW) to determine if your water supply will need to be regulated as a public water supply. Regardless of this outcome, the well that will be used for the non-residential water supply **will need to be tested for potability (test for coliforms and e. Coli)** and produce satisfactory results. A list of state certified labs can be found here: <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/88469/Water-Testing-Labs?bidId=>.

If there will be any type of food prep (not including catering), the food service/restaurant section of the

Health Department will need to be involved for permitting and inspection. Applications, fees, and permits are required for these services and approvals.

#### **Locating an OSS or Well Water Service Provider**

A list of private sector services providers can be found on the Virginia Department of Health website, and can be accessed here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/onsite-sewage-water-services-updated/septic-system-and-private-well-service-providers/>.