

CITY OF MCMINNVILLE
BUILDING DIVISION
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SEPTIC SYSTEM AND WELL ABANDONMENTS

SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Abandoned systems must be approved by the Yamhill County Planning and Building Department. A copy of their approval must be provided to the City’s Building Division prior to approval of demolition permit final inspections.

1. The owner shall abandon a system when:
 - a) A sewerage system becomes available and the building sewer has been connected; or
 - b) The source of sewage has been permanently eliminated; or
 - c) The system has been operated in violation of OAR 340-71-130(13), unless and until a repair permit and Certificate of Satisfactory Completion are subsequently issued; or
 - d) The system has been constructed, installed, altered, or repaired without a required permit authorizing same, unless and until a permit is subsequently issued; or
 - e) The system has been operated or used without a required Certificate of Satisfactory Completion or Authorization Notice authorizing same, unless and until a Certificate of Satisfactory Completion Notice is subsequently issued.

2. Procedures for Abandonment:
 - a) The septic tank shall be removed OR the septic tank, cesspool or seepage pit shall be pumped by a licensed sewage disposal service to remove all sludge and the top removed;
 - b) The septic tank, cesspool or seepage pit shall be filled with reject sand, bar run gravel, or other material approved by the Yamhill County Planning and Building Department;
 - c) The building sewer shall be permanently capped.
 - d) If, in the judgment of the County, it is not reasonably possible or necessary to comply with subsection (2)(a) and (2)(b) of this rule, the County may waive either or both of these requirements provided such action does not constitute a menace to public health, welfare or safety.

WELLS

The following is an excerpt from the State of Oregon's Water Resources Department "Water Well Construction Maintenance, and Abandonment" guide. "The Department" refers to the Water Resources Department

Proper abandonment of wells is a requirement of the State of Oregon's Water Resources Department (WRD). Unused wells that are not properly abandoned can cause ground water contamination, waste, or be dangerous to people and animals on the property. Ultimately, landowners can be held responsible for harm to the ground water resource resulting from old or unused wells. Oregon's well abandonment standards are designed to prevent contamination of the well or aquifer by surface and subsurface leakage, which may carry harmful chemicals or bacteria. The standards also seek to prevent physical injury, and waste of water. WRD has minimum standards that describe the acceptable method well abandonment.

A well is considered permanently abandoned when it is completely filled so that movement of water within the well is permanently stopped. With the exception of hand-dug wells, a permanent abandonment must be done by a licensed water well constructor, or the landowner under a Landowner's Water Well Permit.

The proper abandonment method will depend on information obtained from an examination of the well log and an onsite investigation of the well. Generally, a drilled well with steel or plastic casing will be abandoned by either removing or ripping the casing and filling the borehole with a material such as concrete from the bottom up. Any pump, wiring, or debris in the well must be removed before the concrete is placed.

If a review of the well log indicates that the well is a filter or gravel-packed well (where pea gravel is used to screen out loose geologic material in the well), the WRD must pre-approve any abandonment method. A greater potential exists for harm to the ground water resource from incorrect abandonment of this type of well due to the artificial gravel-pack material.

If a hand-dug well is to be abandoned, you must notify the WRD and obtain approval for the abandonment method before beginning the abandonment. Typically, a hand-dug well free of debris may be abandoned by filling the well a material such as concrete to above the water-bearing zone and then clean fill (not gravel) to land surface. Hand-dug wells containing debris may be subject to other abandonment methods.

Proof of proper well abandonment from the WRD must be provided to the McMinnville Building Division prior to final approval of your demolition permit.

For more specific information about well abandonment, contact a well constructor or the Water Resources Department at 503) 986-0900.