

Treatment plants and septic tanks



Everything you need to know:

With a growing housing population within the rural areas of East Suffolk, you may not be able to link into a public sewer so there other options available? It is however to be mindful that it isn't always as straight forward as it may seem and this is where your Local Authority Building Control Team can help! Below are some helpful tips and things to be aware of.

What should you consider?

Are you planning on removing an existing system and installing a new one with the same pipework, or is this a brand new system?

What type of system?

Treatment plants & septic tanks fundamentally do the same job but with different outcomes. A Treatment Plant treats all your effluent and allows it all to percolate through the soil. A septic tank, on the other hand, stores the solids ready to be collected whilst allowing the water to disperse through the ground.

Both systems require some type of percolation via either a drainage field / mound, constructed wetland, soakaway or a flowing ditch so land parcel size must be a consideration. Soil needs to be free draining. A percolation test will need to be undertaken prior to any installation so the design and size of the secondary treatment can be calculated.

Where do I install the system?

Systems should be installed downhill from the property or they will not work effectively as they work on gravity.

Treatment plants need to be sited 7m from a dwelling with the outfall from the plant sited 10m away any from watercourses and buildings.

Septic tanks also need to be sited 7 m from a dwelling but it must also be within 30m of a vehicle access that is capable of taking 12 tonnes.

What do you need to do next?

Installing either system will require a Building Regulations application and approval.

Discuss your proposal with East Suffolk Building Control team to ensure a safe and effective installation of the system.

Any discharge from a waste water treatment system may require the consent from the Environment Agency. It would be advisable to check first.

If you don't want to undertake the project yourself there are companies that will install, maintain and empty (if required) your system. We recommend doing your research and ask for references.

Make your Building regulations application here : www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/building-control/make-a-building-regulations-application

You can start work 48 hours after submitting your application.

Please notify us the day before you require an inspection.

We will need to inspect;

- Any installed drainage.
- The treatment plant / septic tank installation.
- Completion
- An electrical certificate will be required.

On successful completion you will receive a certificate of compliance to keep safe should you ever sell your property.

Still have a query? Did you know that we do offer 1 hours free pre application consultation for those who need it. Contact us today at buildingcontrol@eastsuffolk.gov.uk / 01502 523072