



ON-SITE SEWAGE SYSTEMS Archaeological/Historic and Critical Area Requirements

**Community Development & Planning
(360) 378-2354**

Siting new on-site sewage system components: Prior to siting a new on-site sewage system, Community Planning & Development (CD&P) should be contacted to obtain an archaeological and critical area site review to ensure compliance with the archaeological/historic regulations in SJCC 18.50.050 and 18.60.210 and the critical area regulations in San Juan County Code 18.30.110 -.160. Staff can assist you with a review of the cultural and critical area maps to ensure that a system is proposed in a compliant site. Sewage design applications submitted to San Juan County Health and Community Services will be transmitted to the CD&P for review unless advance site approval has been obtained from CD&P.

Review areas: Critical area review should be completed to ensure compliance with regulations that affect the following areas:

- Critical Aquifer recharge area - all County
- Frequently Flooded area
- 200 feet from a geologically hazardous area
- 300 feet from a wetland
- 200 feet from a fish and wildlife habitat conservation area
- 1,000 feet from a golden eagle nest and ¼ mile from a peregrine falcon or great heron nests and 1,640 feet from western toad habitat

New on-site sewage systems: Effective March 31, 2014, new regulations protecting wetlands and Aquatic FWHCAs specify which on-site sewage system components may be located in a wetland, Aquatic FWHCA, or its buffers and what conditions apply to the installation of the components. FWHCAs include certain marine waters, naturally occurring ponds under twenty acres and their submerged aquatic beds that provide fish or wildlife habitat, and lakes and streams that are waters of the State.

For siting new systems in wetlands or their buffers, comply with Item (u.) of SJCC 18.30.150 Table 3.5 Structures, Uses and Activities Allowed in Wetlands and Wetland Buffers for the location and installation of new system components:

Activity	Allowed Within Wetland	Allowed Within Wetland Buffers
u. The following on-site sewage disposal system components:	NO	YES
i. Water-tight septic tanks and pump chambers;		
ii. Sleeved and water-tight sewer lines; and	YES	YES
iii. Drainfields ² are allowed when they conform with local and State requirements, reasonable efforts are made to avoid impacts to wetland functions and values, and: (A) Appropriate BMPs are used to minimize erosion, sedimentation and soil disturbance; (B) For new systems, limited tree removal is allowed in habitat buffers, provided: (1) Stumps are retained and disturbance of the soil and duff layer is minimized; (2) The remaining forest consists of trees that are multi-aged and well distributed across the buffer and the canopy cover for the remaining forest is at least 65%; (3) All vegetation overhanging streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and marine waters	NO	YES, outside of the water quality buffer

is retained; and (4) Trees ≥ 12 inches dbh (<i>diameter at breast height = 4.5"</i>) are retained; and (C) Any adverse impacts to critical areas or their buffers are mitigated in accordance with SJCC 18.30.110(E).		
---	--	--

For siting new and replacement systems in Aquatic Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs) or their buffers, comply with Item (s.) of SJCC 18.30.160 Table 3.8 Structures, Uses and Activities Allowed in and over Aquatic Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas and Their Water Quality Buffers:

Activity	Aquatic FWCA (the area within the water)	Buffer
s. Components of on-site sewage disposal system in conformance with local and state requirements:	NO	YES
i. Water-tight septic tanks and pump chambers;		
ii. Sleeved and water-tight sewer lines; and/or	YES	YES
iii. Drainfields are allowed provided reasonable efforts are made to avoid impacts to Aquatic FWCA functions and values, and: (A) BMPs are used to minimize erosion, sedimentation and soil disturbance; (B) For new systems, trees within Tree Protection Zones are retained in accordance with subsection E.2 of this section; (C) Any adverse impacts to critical areas are mitigated in accordance with SJCC 18.30.110(E); and (D) For replacement of existing , failing system where there is no other alternative that will meet State requirements (including locating the new system in the same place as the old system, trees within the Tree Protection Zones are retained to the greatest extent possible).	NO	YES, outside of the water quality buffer

Operation, maintenance, repair, remodel, or replacement of existing system components: SJCC 18.30.110.C exempts (from the critical area regulations) the operation, maintenance, repair, remodel, or replacement of existing structures, facilities, infrastructure systems, development areas and uses, provided there is no further intrusion into geologically hazardous areas, frequently flooded areas, wetlands, or fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas or their buffers; soil erosion is controlled; disturbed areas are promptly stabilized; and actions do not have an additional adverse effect on the functions and values of critical areas. Existing structures, uses and activities located within shorelines of the state are addressed separately as described in SJCC 18.30.110(B) above and 18.30.160.

Development Area: SJCC 18.20.040 defines development area as the area that is directly altered as a result of development. This includes, but is not limited to, the area containing structures, driveways, gardens, landscaped areas, areas of grading, excavation, or fill.

Determining if there are adverse impacts to critical areas: An assessment of the potential adverse impacts should include (at a minimum) an assessment of any increase water flow or pollutant transport to the critical area, effects of vegetation removal on the food web, the overall effects on protected plants, animals or habitats of local importance and shoreline effects (e.g. substrate size/habitat quality).

Mitigation: When mitigation of adverse impacts to critical areas is required, mitigation plans prepared by qualified professionals (see SJCC 18.20.170) must be prepared in accordance with SJCC 18.30.110.E and reviewed and approved by the San Juan County CD&P.