

# OWTS Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. How do I find out if my property is connected to the sewer or if I have a septic system?

- You may start off by investigating if your property has a sewer wye permit (a permit for the connection of a pipe from the edge of your property to the sewer). You may do this by visiting the NavigateLA website [here](#). The steps required to find if a permit exists are the following:
  - o Type your home address without city, state, zip code information (EX: 123 A St)
  - o Press enter or click the magnifying glass which is located inside the search box
  - o Verify search results match your property
  - o If your property is not already highlighted zoom in and click on your property which should be labeled in blue, after doing so a report window will appear
  - o Click on **Parcel Sewer Wye Report**
  - o From the Parcel Sewer Wye Report the user will either be provided with a report which includes the permit number in the bottom along with the property number **or** a message which states “No Sewer Wye Permit found for this parcel” which indicates that the property does not have a permit to connect to the sewer and may be on a septic system
- If further assistance is needed, please contact the Wastewater Engineering Services Division GIS Section within the LA Bureau of Sanitation at (323) 342-6242 or email the OWTS program of the Bureau of Sanitation at [septic.systems@lacity.org](mailto:septic.systems@lacity.org).

## 2. How can I obtain a records report of my residential property?

- To obtain a residential records report, you will need to submit an Application for Report of Residential Property Records and Pending Special Assessment Liens also known as Form 12B to the Department of Building and Safety. You may find this application online [here](#). For additional questions you may ask to be directed to the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Records Counter by calling 311.

## 3. If I have a septic system how can I locate it on my property?

If you have a plot plan of your property you may easily find the location of your septic system. However, if you do not own a copy of the property plot plan or need additional assistance locating your system you may contact the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Grading Division by calling 311.

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### **4. Can I obtain plot plans which indicate the location of my septic system relative to my property?**

Yes, you may request a plot plan, which is a detailed diagram of your property, including the location of your septic system relative to your property. For the plot plan you may submit a request to the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Records Counter by clicking [here](#). For additional questions regarding plans/blueprints you may contact the Records Counter at the Department of Building and Safety by calling 311. Lastly, it is important to note that the Department of Building and Safety will not have blueprints for Single Family Dwellings and any building under three stories constructed before 1978.

### **5. What are the requirements to install an Advanced Treatment System (advanced septic system)?**

- Advanced Treatment Systems are required if the property is in a high risk area as determined by LA Sanitation (within 900ft of an active water well, within 600ft from impaired water bodies as defined in section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, within 150ft from a stream, or 5ft above the groundwater table.). If an Advanced Treatment System is required, homeowners will need to hire a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) to design their advanced treatment system, according to the Regional Water Quality Control Board's performance requirements and apply for a Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) that will allow the discharge of effluent. Lastly, to install the Advanced System the homeowner will need to hire a licensed and approved contractor. For more information on the Waste Discharge Requirements please click [here](#).

### **6. Can I start to install the Advanced Treatment System, after I am provided with the system design?**

- No, you will need the Wastewater Discharge Requirements (WDRs), a permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 4, Los Angeles) by contacting them at (213) 576 6600. More information on the WDRs is available on their website [here](#). After obtaining the WDRs, a copy of the completed documents must be provided to the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety before the City issues a permit for the installation of OWTS. You may contact the Department of Building and Safety Grading Division by calling 311.

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### 7. Are there further steps I need to take, after my design for an advanced system is approved and implemented?

- Yes, the Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) will provide you with a list of steps which may include entering a maintenance agreement with a licensed and approved contractor and to submit quarterly monitoring reports to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The following diagram represents sample costs pertaining to advanced treatment systems and the related requirements.
  
- Please note that the costs below represent prices recently provided by the Water Quality Control Board and may be subject to change, for additional questions or for an updated breakdown of expenses, please contact the Regional Water Quality Control Board at (213) 576-6600.

	<b>3C</b>	<b>2C</b>	<b>3B</b>	<b>2B</b>
<b>Multi-Family (less than 20, 000 gpd)</b>	\$ 971/year. Conventional system With small volume (< 2,000 gpd) with enough groundwater separation (>10 ft).	\$ 5,203/year. Conventional system in High risk area (<600 ft from impaired surface water or <150 ft from surface water or drinking water well).	\$ 2,183/year. Same conditions as 3C except it has an advance treatment system	\$ 6,937/year. Advance system in high risk area.
<b>Commercial, non food (less than 20, 000 gpd)</b>	\$ 971/year. Conventional system With small volume (< 2,000 gpd) with enough groundwater separation (>10 ft).	\$ 5,203/year. Conventional system in High risk area (<600 ft from impaired surface water or <150 ft from surface water or drinking water well).	\$ 2,183/year. Same conditions as 3C except it has an advance treatment system	\$ 6,937/year. Advance treatment system in high risk area.
<b>Restaurants or commercial properties with restaurants (less than 20,000 gpd)</b>	\$ 1,941/year. Conventional septic tanks With Grease trap and small volume (< 2,000 gpd) with enough groundwater separation (>10 ft).	\$ 10,405/year. Conventional system with grease trap but in High risk area (<600 ft from impaired surface water or <150 ft from surface water or drinking water well).	\$4,366/year. Same conditions as 3C except it has an advance treatment system	\$ 13,874/year. Advance treatment system in high risk area.

### 8. Where can I apply for a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR)?

- This application can be found under Land Disposal Program on the Regional Water Quality Control Board’s website [here](#). If further assistance is needed, you may contact The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) at (213) 576 6600.

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## 9. Where can I obtain information regarding percolation testing?

- To obtain information regarding percolation testing please visit the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Informational Bulletin accessible [here](#). For additional questions regarding percolation testing, please contact the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Grading Division by calling 311.

## 10. How much does it cost to connect to the public sewer and how do I connect?

- The construction cost for the house sewer connection (from the edge of the property to the City sewer) varies based on the length and geologic conditions. To find out how to connect and costs associated with connecting to the sewer please contact the Bureau of Engineering's (BOE) Public Counter based on respective location. For location, hours of operation, and contact information, please visit the Bureau of Engineering website [here](#).

## 11. How can we find out the location of the nearest sewer?

- To find the nearest sewer and learn how to connect please contact the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) public counter based on respective location [here](#) or by visiting NavigateLA [here](#) and following these steps:
  - Type your home address without city, state, zip code information (EX: 123 A St)
  - Press enter or click the magnifying glass which is located inside the search box
  - Verify search results match your property
  - If your property is not already highlighted zoom in to your property, property numbers are labeled in a blue color
  - Click on the advanced options button displaying two gears
  - A dropdown menu labeled **Show Me** will appear, select **Infrastructure – Sewer Information**
  - Green lines will appear parallel to the parcels, these are sewer pipes
  - To measure the distance for comparison between sewers you may click on the tools button which is the second button on the list displaying a wrench and a hammer
  - A tool menu will appear, select the measure distance button which displays a ruler with two blue arrows above it
  - Click on the map to select a starting point and double-click to end distance measurement.
  - Finally you may click on the nearest pipeline for the report with details regarding that pipe

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### **12. If a sewer connection is not there, does the City pay for it to be brought in?**

- The City will provide a sewer only for commercial properties (5 dwellings units and above) when a septic system is located in a Ground Water Improvement District (GID), which manages the use of surface water and groundwater to improve conditions; for residential properties or other commercial properties, the responsibility of covering the costs to bring in a mainline sewer belongs to the owner. For estimated construction costs or more information, please contact your nearest Bureau of Engineering (BOE) District Office. For BOE location and contact information please click [here](#).

### **13. What financial assistance is available to property owners to connect to sewer?**

- Unfortunately, there are no financial assistance programs available at this time. The City understands that many residents would like to abandon their septic system but do not have the financial resources to do so, therefore, the City is actively pursuing the implementation of a Sewer Connection Financial Assistance Program which will essentially be a low interest loan program to assist homeowners with the costs associated with connecting to the sewer. More information on this program will be shared on our website as it becomes available. However, in the meantime homeowners can request a sewer assessment, more information on assessment projects and the assessment form can be found on our website [here](#).

### **14. What are the design requirements for septic systems?**

- To obtain information regarding the current design requirements for septic systems you may look at the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety's Informational Bulletin on Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) which can be accessed online [here](#) or you may contact the Department of Building and Safety by calling 311.

### **15. What is the City's policy on failing OWTS?**

- If you or someone you know has a failing septic system, please contact the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety to request an inspection by calling 311. If the failing system is creating a hazard to the environment and public health or for systems outside of the City's boundary, please contact the Los Angeles County Public Health Department by calling (888) 700-9995. Additionally, you may obtain more information on the City's OWTS enforcement procedures by viewing Attachment 9 of the City's Annual Progress and Implementation Report accessible on our website [here](#).

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### **16. Is it permitted to empty an RV's sewage system directly into their septic tank?**

- No, you may find the location and contact information for the nearest legal dumping station for recreational vehicles [here](#). For additional assistance, you may contact the Industrial Wastewater Management Division at (323) 342-6200 or via email [San.IWMD@lacity.org](mailto:San.IWMD@lacity.org).

### **17. How can I look up the current status of Septic-To-Sewer assessment projects?**

- You may contact the City Clerk at (213) 978-1045 to obtain the council file number or search by project title [here](#). The process for researching it online is the following: 1.) You will have the option of a simple/advance search, once you have the information typed, click search; 2.) The search results/records should come up on the right hand side of the page with a council file, title, and last change.

### **18. I am selling my property that has a septic system, is there anything that I must do?**

- You must disclose the condition of your septic system to the new buyers so they are aware of the septic systems' existence and condition, and additionally to dismiss any future legal liability. For additional information, please reference the Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems available on our website [here](#).

### **19. I want to discharge the water from dewatering activities (removal of ground or surface water) during my construction, are there any requirements?**

- If you are looking to discharge into the City's sewer system then you will need to apply for a Sewer Capacity Availability Review (SCAR) permit. The SCAR is a process where hydraulic analysis is performed to determine sewer capacity availability for a proposed discharge (this applies to any type of discharge into the sewer system). The application is initiated at any of the four Bureau of Engineering District offices irrespective of the project's location. For more information please contact the BOE. Location, hours, and contact information for the Bureau of Engineering are available [here](#).