

# Private Sewage Works - Steps

Questions & Answers | January 2026

## General:

### 1. What are private sewage works?

Private sewage works are privately owned systems located on a single property used for the collection, storage, transmission, and treatment or disposal of sewage. Private sewage works are installed on properties with plumbing systems that aren't connected to a communal sewage works.

### 2. What has changed in these amendments?

There are various changes. Outdated sewage disposal requirements in [The Shoreland Pollution Control Regulations, 1976](#) have been updated and incorporated into [The Private Sewage Works Regulations](#). The regulations also contain a certification requirement for anyone who designs private sewage works. In addition, there are updated requirements for private sewage works permits.

### 3. When do these amendments go into effect?

The coming into force date for these amendments is November 1, 2026.

### 4. How will these amendments impact existing private sewage works?

The amendments apply to permit applications for new private sewage works submitted to the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) as of November 1, 2026. An amendment that will apply to existing private sewage works will enable the SHA to require changes to a system if it is found to be faulty or defective. This would typically be in situations where the system is creating a nuisance or health hazard.

### 5. Why were these amendments necessary?

Private sewage works design and technology continues to advance. These systems are often being used to serve large residences in high density rural subdivisions as well as complex commercial and industrial properties. These new requirements will help ensure a property owner's private sewage works operates well into the future while protecting ground and surface water resources.

## Permits:

### 1. Will there be any changes to how I apply for a private sewage works permit?

Anyone who installs, constructs, extends, renovates, alters, or repairs private sewage works must still obtain a permit from the SHA and pay the associated permit fee. Permits for private sewage works other than septic tanks or jet-type disposal systems must indicate the name and contact information for the certified designer. A site evaluation report and construction drawing are now required for all permits.

### 2. What is meant by a site evaluation report and construction drawing?

These requirements are detailed in the [Saskatchewan Onsite Wastewater Disposal Guide](#) which is available on the Government of Saskatchewan website. The site evaluation report captures information about the characteristics of the property and the site soil conditions. This information would typically be provided by the system designer. The construction drawings are provided by either the designer or the installer and will provide the SHA and property owner important details about the system for future reference.

### 3. Has the permit fee changed?

Yes, the permit fee has increased from \$30 to \$100. This is the first permit fee increase for private sewage works since the 1990s.

# Designer Certification

## 1. What is designer certification?

After November 1, 2026, all private sewage works, except septic tanks and jet-type disposal systems, must be designed by someone who has successfully completed a provincially recognized private sewage works practitioner course. In Saskatchewan, the certification course delivered by the Saskatchewan Onsite Wastewater Management Association is recognized.

## 1. Why are septic tanks and jet-type disposal systems not subject to the designer certification requirements.

Septic tanks, sewage holding tanks, and jet-type disposal systems (surface sewage ejectors) are not as complex to design and install as sewage treatment systems such as a mounds and chamber systems. Tanks and jets do not require the same level of expertise for determining soil types, soil structures, system sizing, and identifying the necessary system components such as electrical systems, pumps, piping and other materials. Jet-type disposal systems are only permitted for installation in low development density areas and within large parcels (10 acre minimum).

## 2. Why does this certification requirement go into effect on November 1, 2026?

The amendments come into effect November 1, 2026, to provide industry time to enroll in and complete a recognized certification course. Through previous consultations, the Ministry of Health is aware that the majority of industry professionals have already completed this training.

## 3. Do I have to register my certification?

Yes. Anyone who designs private sewage works will have to register with the SHA. Designers can speak with their local public health inspector for more information and will need to provide their contact information and proof of certification (e.g. copy of certificate, certification number). More information on the registry requirements will be provided at a later date.

## 4. Will I be able to apply for a private sewage works permit without having certification?

After November 1, 2026, certification will be required for all permits to construct a private sewage works except septic tanks and jet-type disposal systems.

## 5. Does this certification requirement affect installers of private sewage works?

Installers that design the systems they install will require certification after November 1, 2026, and will need to register their certification with the SHA. Uncertified installers will need to work with certified designer's and provide the designer's name and contact information when applying for a private sewage works permit.

## 6. Can I install a private sewage works if I get a design from a certified designer?

Yes. Installers may choose to work with a certified designer.

## 7. How do I obtain certification?

The Saskatchewan Onsite Wastewater Management Association offers an Onsite Wastewater Practitioner Course that is provincially recognized and meets the certification requirement. Any other course recognized by a provincial government will be recognized as long as proof of certification can be provided to the SHA when registering.

## 8. How much does it cost to register with the Saskatchewan Health Authority?

There is no fee for registering with the SHA. More information about submitting your registration will be provided at a later date.

**9. Why do certified designers have to provide written plans for the owner of the private sewage works?**

Private sewage works are largely invisible once installed. System owners need to have detailed information about private sewage works on their property. This is important if there are issues with the system's performance in the future or if the property is sold.

**10. What type of operational information does the certified designer have to provide to the owner of the private sewage works?**

Owners should be given enough information to understand how their system works and what routine maintenance is required. The minimum requirements for the operation and maintenance manual are indicated in section 7.2.3 of the [Saskatchewan Onsite Wastewater Disposal Guide](#).

## **Shoreland Development Area Requirements**

**1. Why are The Shoreland Pollution Control Regulations, 1976 being repealed?**

[The Shoreland Pollution Control Regulations, 1976](#) contains requirements for sewage disposal in shoreland development areas. The requirements in this outdated regulation have been reviewed and relevant provisions have been moved to [The Private Sewage Works Regulations](#).

**2. Can I still install a pit privy or seepage pit at my cottage at the lake?**

After November 1, 2026, pit privies and seepage pits will not be permitted in a shoreland development area, as defined in the regulations. Outdoor toilets and privies are still allowed in the shoreland area provided the sewage is contained in a CSA-approved 1000-gallon sewage holding tank.