

Question: What are the clearance requirements for disposal fields, treatment mounds, open discharge systems, lagoons, septic tanks, holding tanks and privies for private sewage disposal?

Answer: The minimum *separation distances* (setbacks) are as follows: (from current 2015 Standard of Practice (SOP))

Distance From/To	Property Line	Water Source or Water Well	Water Course * Article 2.1.2.4	Building with Basement, Cellar or Crawl Space	Building without Basement, Cellar or Crawl Space	Building with permanent foundation without basement, cellar or crawl space	Building without permanent foundation	** Building	Septic Tanks
Holding Tanks	1 m (3.25 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Septic Tanks	1 m (3.25 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Effluent Tanks	1 m (3.25 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Settling Tanks	Refer to 2015 SOP 6.2.2	10m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Disposal Fields (Treatment)	1.5 m (5 ft)	15 m (50 ft)	* 15 m (50 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	5 m (17 ft)	1 m (3.25 ft)	-	5 m
Treatment Mounds	3 m (10 ft)	15 m (50 ft)	* 15 m (50 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	3 m (10 ft)
Drip Dispersal and Irrigation	Refer to 2015 SOP 8.5.2	15 m (50 ft)	*15 m (50 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	5 m (17 ft)	1 m (3.25 ft)	-	5 m (17 ft)
Open Discharge Systems	90 m (300 ft)	50 m (165 ft)	* 45 m (150 ft)	-	-	-	-	45 m (150 ft)	-
Lagoon serving a single family dwelling or duplex	30 m (100 ft)	100 m (330 ft)	90 m (300 ft)	-	-	-	-	45 m (150 ft)	-
Lagoon serving other than a single family dwelling or duplex	30 m (100 ft) 90 m (300 ft) from a numbered primary or secondary road	100 m (330 ft)	90 m (300 ft)	-	-	-	-	90 m (300 ft)	-
Privies-Earthen	5 m (17 ft)	15 m (50 ft)	*15 m (50 ft)	-	-	-	-	6 m (20 ft) (food prep)	3.5 m (11.5 ft) (single family dwelling)
Privies-Tank (Water-tight)	5 m (17 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	6 m (20 ft) (food prep)	-

Distance From/To	Property Line	Water Source or Water Source	Water Course * Article 2.1.2.4	Building with Basement, Cellar or Crawl Space	Building without Basement, Cellar or Crawl Space	Building with permanent foundation without basement, cellar or crawl space	Building without permanent foundation	** Building	Septic Tanks
Packaged Sewage Treatment Plants	Refer to 2015 SOP 5.2.2	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Sand Filters	1 m (3.25 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-
Gravel Filters	Refer to 2015 SOP 5.4.2	10 m (33 ft)	10 m (33 ft)	-	-	-	-	1 m (3.25 ft)	-

Please reference the Alberta Private Sewage Systems Standard of Practice 2015 for complete design, installation, and material requirements.

*** Article 2.1.2.4 Separation from Specific Surface Waters**

1) The *soil*-based treatment component of an *on-site wastewater treatment system* shall be located not less than 90 m (300 ft.) from the shore of a lake, river, stream, or creek.

2) Notwithstanding the requirements of Sentence (1), where a principal *building* or other *development* feature is situated between the *soil*-based treatment component and a lake, river, stream, or creek, such that a failure of the system causing *effluent* on the ground surface will be obvious and create an undesirable impact on the owner, the distance may be reduced to the minimum distance requirements set out in this Standard for the particular type of treatment system being used.

** **Building** means any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

References:

- SAFETY CODES ACT: Private Sewage Disposal Systems Regulation AR 229/1997 Consolidated up to 196/2015 Alberta
- Private Sewage Systems Standard of Practice 2015