



Marin Septic Requirement Supplemental Notes for ADU Development

See Residential Improvement Policy for further details

J/ADU OPPORTUNITIES

JADUs are classified under “Minor Maintenance and Repairs” and do not need a EHS permit.

Changing out a window to a door and adding a porch or deck to provide access to a JADU, qualifies as a “Minor Remodel” and will require an EHS permit and an inspection report by qualifying provider.

Creating a J/ADU out of habitable space within the existing residence as a “Bedroom Swap”, that effects less than 50% of the home, will count as a “Minor Remodel” requiring a septic permit and an inspection report by qualifying provider.

Creating an ADU using existing non-habitable space, or by adding on less than 500sf, can count as a “Minor Expansion” if it is done as a “Bedroom Swap” and will therefore require a Class 2 system assuming it does not exceed the allowable square footage per bedrooms.

Creating a new ADU greater than 500sf will require a Class 1 system.

WASTEWATER FLOWS

Smaller homes tend to be at their wastewater limits, while larger homes tend to have additional capacity because they are not fully occupied.

Old systems are rated at 150 gallons of affluent a day per bedroom. While new systems are rated at 105 gallons of affluent a day per bedroom. If a system is permitted and rated Class 1 or Class 2 their usage may be rated at 105 gallons a day per bedroom to allow for an additional bedroom or ADU.

Operating permits - required if systems are marginally within the limits for separation from groundwater. They track performance and usage.

TESTING

Septic Inspection - report must be provided by a County-registered septic system service provider. Inspection must be within one year of permit submittal date. Must meet at least Class 3 standards or repairs will be required.

Performance Reviews – requires load testing.

Site Evaluation - looks at site conditions, ground water, setbacks, and soil conditions. County staff are present during site evaluations.

Note: Homeowner do not have to complete the work if they get their system evaluated and they do not meet the requirements for Class 1 or 2 but will need to fix the system if it is actively failing and poses a threat to environmental health.

DRIP SYSTEMS

May be used on lots that are smaller and do not have space for an appropriately sized septic field that meets the bedroom count of the home. Calculation must be done by a qualified consultant to determine the area needed for a drip system.

SEPTIC SYSTEM LIFE SPAN

Septic systems operate normally for about 25 – 30 years. Repairs may be needed to keep the system functioning properly after that. Wear and tear depends on the site conditions and usage.

PROCESS

Application is sent from Planning or Building to EHS if the project requires a septic permit. EHS will reach out to the homeowner to let them know what is required. Permits require a site plan and may require an as-built drawing of the existing system. There is a list of qualified consultants and contractors that must prepare the documents and do the testing.

To learn more, please reach out by email

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Or visit our site

www.helloadu.org

