

## Septic Systems & Stream Crossings

### Why would a septic system need to cross a stream?

If your building location is on one side of a stream and your approved drainfield area is on the other side, you'll need to cross the stream with an effluent sewer pipe to send effluent from your septic tank to the drainfield.

### What permits are required?

A permit from DEQ is required to install any part of a septic system. Also, Oregon's Removal-Fill Law (ORS 196.795-990) requires people who plan to remove or fill material in waters of the state to obtain a permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL).

### What activities need a DSL permit?

1. Projects requiring the removal or fill of 50 or more cubic yards of material in waters of the state.
2. The removal or fill of any material in a stream designated as essential salmon habitat, regardless of the number of cubic yards affected.
3. The removal or fill of any material from the bed and banks of scenic waterways regardless of the number of cubic yards affected.

If you're unsure if you need a permit from DSL, visit the DSL website, where you can find a list of essential salmon habitat, a list of scenic waterways, or a list of DSL resource coordinators who can help you:

[www.oregon.gov/DSL/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DSL/index.shtml). You can also contact the DSL office in Salem directly by phone at (503) 378-3805.

### What conditions apply to DSL permits?

All permits include standard and special design and operating conditions that are intended to ensure the protection, conservation and best use of the state's water resources and prevent harm to fishery and recreational uses of the waters. A common condition is that the project be conducted during the in-water work period established by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW). Visit the ODFW website to find a list of in-water work periods as well as a list of contacts:

[www.oregon.gov/ODFW/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODFW/index.shtml)

You can also contact the ODFW directly by phone at (800)720-6339.

ODFW provides comments on most DSL removal-fill permits. Additional conditions may apply depending on the nature of your project.

### How long will the permit process take?

State law requires DSL to determine whether an application for a joint removal-fill permit is complete within 40 days of receipt and to issue a decision within 90 days of the completeness determination. However, in an emergency, DSL can authorize work in advance verbally as soon as all necessary information about the project is obtained. Emergency authorizations are available only for very limited, unforeseen circumstances. Contact DSL for more information as soon as you become aware of a problem or potential emergency.

DEQ cannot issue a septic system permit until your application is considered complete. If a stream crossing is involved, a copy of your DSL permit must accompany your application for a septic system permit. An engineer may also be required to design the crossing depending on the situation. Visit DEQ's Onsite Web page to see the procedures and criteria for installing a new septic system:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/onsite/onsite.htm>.

Once your application is considered complete, DEQ must issue your construction-installation permit within 20 days. Due to the limited time of in-water work periods, it is important that you plan your project in advance.

### What if I want to cross over a stream using a bridge or other support?

Many factors must be considered when crossing over a stream using a bridge or other support, such as use of long-term structures, flooding events, freezing, and vandalism protection. ODFW may provide conditions for this type of crossing.

### For more information

Contact one of the DEQ offices listed at right, or visit the DEQ Web site: [www.oregon.gov/DEQ/](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ/).

### Alternative formats

Alternative formats (Braille, large type) of this document can be made available. Contact DEQ's Office of Communications & Outreach, Portland, at (503) 229-5696 or call toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696.



State of Oregon  
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