



REGIONAL DISTRICT  
of Fraser-Fort George

Development Services  
Planning



## SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS - LAKES

The Regional District's **Zoning Bylaw No. 2892** includes sewage disposal system setback requirements for properties within 150m of the Natural Boundary of a lake. These setback requirements must be met when upgrading or building a sewage disposal system.

### What is the Purpose of the Setback Requirements?

The setbacks in Zoning Bylaw No. 2892 have been established as minimum setback requirements to protect the natural environment, its ecosystem and biological diversity of lake resources within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. These setbacks are over and above the minimum setbacks for a sewage system from a lake as required by the Sewerage System Regulation.

#### Definition:

Zoning Bylaw No. 2892 defines the following:

**Natural Boundary** means the visible high water mark of any lake, river, stream or other body of water where the presence and action of the water are so common and usual and so long continued in all ordinary years as to mark upon the soil of the bed of the lake, river, stream or other body of water a character distinct from that of the banks thereof, in respect of vegetation, as well as in respect of the nature of the soil itself.

### Types of Systems Regulated and Setback Requirements

The sewage disposal system setbacks in Zoning Bylaw No. 2892 are for lagoons, pit privies (out houses) and absorption fields.

#### Lagoons

A Sewage Disposal Lagoon is required to be a minimum of 60m (200ft) from the Natural Boundary of a lake.

#### Pit Privy

There are some recreational zones within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George where a pit privy (out house) is permitted. To verify if you are permitted to construct a pit privy on a property, please contact Development Services.

If permitted, a pit privy is required to be a minimum of 60m (200ft) from the Natural Boundary of a Lake, or 30m (100ft) where it is allowable through a percolation test as indicated in Table A of Zoning Bylaw No. 2892.

#### Sewage Absorption Fields

The minimum horizontal distance for a drainage field, surface or subsurface sewage disposal system from the natural boundary of a lake is dependent on soil percolation rates.

**Table A** of Zoning Bylaw No. 2892 shows the minimum distance of an absorption field in relation to percolation rates. The minimum distance of an absorption field, depending on percolation rates, ranges from 30m (100ft) to 150m (492ft).

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**TABLE A**

**Minimum horizontal distance between the sewage absorption field and a lake Natural Boundary**

		*POROUS	SOIL DEPTH		
Percolation rate min/2.5 cm (min/inch)	1.2m to less than 1.8m (≥ 4ft but < 6ft)	1.8m to less than 2.4m (≥ 6ft but < 8ft)	2.4m to less than 3.6m (≥ 8ft but < 12ft)	3.6m to less than 6.0m (≥ 12ft but < 20ft)	6.0m or more (≥ 20ft)
< 2	150m	150	120	90	30m
≥ 2 but <5	150	120	90	60	30
≥ 5 but <10	120	90	60	30	30
≥ 10 but <15	90	60	30	30	30
≥ 15 but <20	60	30	30	30	30
≥ 20 but <30	30m	30	30	30	30m

\*POROUS SOIL DEPTH means the depth of soil above the water table or impervious soil (percolation rate slower than 30min/2.5cm) below septic field pipe or bottom of pit privy.

### Approval of a Sewage Absorption Field System

These regulations must be met to the satisfaction of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George prior to a Development Permit or Building Permit being issued. Results of percolation tests done by an authorized person under the Sewerage System Regulation must be submitted to the Regional District to confirm the setback for an absorption field from the Natural Boundary of a lake.

Other approvals, such as Development Permits, may be required when development is proposed along a water body. Contact the Regional District during the planning stages of your proposed development to ensure that all applicable regulations are considered.

*Making an application does not guarantee approval. The decision rests with the Regional District.*

### Who Can Build a Sewage System?

Only **authorized persons** under the Sewerage System Regulation may plan, install or maintain sewage systems. An authorized person includes a Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner (ROWP) or a professional engineer. ROWPs are registered with the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC). The Northern Health Authority's Public Health Protection Office can provide additional information regarding authorization for sewage systems in the Regional District.

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George will not approve development of a sewage system near a lake without paperwork submitted by a professional engineer or ROWP. A permit for a pit privy is not required under the Sewerage Regulation, but a "best practices" handout for design and installation is available from the Northern Health Authority.

*This information has been prepared to provide convenient information only. It is neither a bylaw nor a legal document. If any contradiction between this information and the relevant bylaws and/or applicable codes arises, such bylaws and/or codes shall be the legal authority.*

### Other Resources

Northern Health Authority  
Public Health Protection  
Prince George: 250-565-2150  
[www.northernhealth.ca](http://www.northernhealth.ca)

Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of  
British Columbia Onsite Wastewater Consumer  
Information Website:  
<https://owrp.asttbc.org/>

For further information, please contact:

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George  
Development Services