

Density for Accessory Dwelling Unit Guidance

On-Site Sewage and Well Permitting Program



Density Determination for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Use this guidance to determine density requirements for existing lots of record served by an on-site sewage system with a proposed ADU. When you develop an existing lot of record for something other than a single-family residence, we must consider development density.

Consult [Environmental Health Code, Chapter 2](#) for all other development requirements.

1. Properties served by an approved public water system

[WAC 246-272A](#) and Environmental Health Code, Chapter 2 set maximum density at 3.5 unit volumes of sewage per acre.

- A unit volume of sewage is either a single-family residence or 450 gallons per day (GPD) wastewater flow.
- For density calculations only, we consider a single-family residence with an ADU a multi-family unit.
- In this case, a unit volume of sewage is 450 GPD.

For example, a 3-bedroom single-family residence with a 2-bedroom ADU has a waste flow of 600 GPD (120 GPD per bedroom).

- We consider this 1.33 unit volumes ($600/450 = 1.33$).
- Based on a maximum density of 3.5 unit volumes or 1575 GPD per acre, this example would require a minimum lot size of 16,553 sq. feet.

2. Properties served by an individual well (one acre or greater in lot size)

Table 1 in Environmental Health Code, Chapter 2 establishes the minimum lot size or a single-family residence served by an on-site sewage system with an individual well.

- For soil types 1-4, the minimum lot size is 1 acre.
- For soil types 5 and 6, the minimum lot size is 2 acres.
- An ADU proposed with an individual well water supply will require 1 or 2 acres (dependent on the established soil type) of minimum land for both the single-family residence and the ADU.

3. Properties served by an individual well (less than one acre in lot size)

An existing single-family residence with a proposed ADU served by an individual well on less than the minimum lot size per soil type must connect to an approved public water system. After we confirm the connection to an approved public water system, see item 1 above to determine required lot size.