

# Iowa's Time of Transfer Inspection Program

Iowa's time of transfer inspection law (SF261) was passed in April of 2008 and took effect on July 1, 2009. The new law requires that homes and buildings served by a septic system have those systems inspected prior to sale or deed transfer.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has developed an inspection procedure and a time of transfer inspector certification program. The certification program includes training that covers the inspection procedure and all reporting requirements.



Inspection reports are reviewed by County Environmental Health staff and copies are kept on file at the IDNR. A copy of the inspection is provided to the party ordering the work.

A copy of the inspection report or a binding acknowledgment for a future inspection must be attached to the Groundwater Hazard Statement before the deed can be transferred.

## WHY IS A TIME OF TRANSFER INSPECTION REQUIRED?

A time of transfer septic inspection is required to decide whether the septic system is adequately treating waste materials at the time a property changes hands.

## DO ALL PROPERTIES NEED TO BE INSPECTED AT TIME OF TRANSFER?

An inspection must be completed prior to any transfer of ownership of a building where a person resides, congregates or is employed that is served by a private sewage disposal system. There are exemptions and the Health Department can provide that information upon request.

## WHAT IF MY PROPERTY DOESN'T SELL RIGHT AWAY?

Inspections are good for 2 years from the date of inspection and the inspection is valid for all transfers within that 2 year period also.

## WHAT IF I BUY/SELL IN WINTER?

If weather or other temporary physical conditions prevent the inspection from being conducted, the buyer shall acknowledge the need for the inspection and commit to making all necessary improvements when conditions improve.



## WHO CAN INSPECT?

Only individuals certified by the IDNR can perform inspections. A complete, statewide list of inspectors can be found at:

[http://www.iowadnr.gov/files/tot\\_list.pdf](http://www.iowadnr.gov/files/tot_list.pdf)

## WHAT IS A GOOD SYSTEM?

A system that is properly treating wastewater and not causing problems in the environment at the time of inspection.



## WHAT IS A BAD SYSTEM?

Inadequate treatment due to an improperly designed or functioning system. Obvious deterioration of any part of the system.

## CAN SYSTEMS BE GRANDFATHERED-IN?

No! The primary purpose of the program is to eliminate systems with no secondary treatment such as a tank discharging directly to the ditch. These systems are illegal and have been for many years. If you have an illegal system, contact your local health department to begin the permit process, forgoing the time of transfer inspection.

## WHAT WILL AN INSPECTION COST?

The fees vary and may cover property research, the field inspection, final report and narrative, and **may include** tank pumping, labor and equipment costs for unearthing any or all parts of the system.

## For More Information



For a complete list of the Time of Transfer rules visit the IDNR

website:

<http://www.iowadnr.gov/tot.html>



For information on possible financial assistance for septic system

replacement visit :

<http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/septic/program.html>



Place your Contact Info here

### TIME OF TRANSFER

#### TO-DO LIST

- Contact the local health department to obtain septic records for the property soon after listing
- Have the tank pumped and inspected. If the tank was pumped and inspected within the last 3 years **and if this can be documented**, this is not required. The owner shall provide documentation of pumping **and** inspection.
- Contact a **certified public or private** inspector. See the DNR website for the most current list.
- Schedule the inspection. The **ENTIRE WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEM** will be inspected. A load test is required and parts of the system may be unearthed to determine if any deficiencies exist.
- Make certain that your private sector inspector submits his/her report to the local environmental health department.

---

#### WHAT IF PROBLEMS ARE FOUND?

- ◆ The County will specify what parts of the system need upgrade, repair or replacement..
- ◆ Some upgrades may require a permit.
- ◆ Time to complete repairs is negotiable. Allowances for weather and contractor availability will always be considered.
- ◆ Always contact local health departments with any questions or problems.

Email Contact Information:

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE IOWA SEPTIC SYSTEM TIME OF TRANSFER LAW

