

# Understanding Business Preapplication Requirements for Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Systems

Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and Department of Environmental Management (DEM) regulate drinking water and wastewater treatment systems. Learn about what documentation might be required with a business preapplication form. When you are ready, complete form online at <https://arcg.is/ju5Dy>.

## Determine Your Type of Drinking Water System

### Off-Site Public Water System (PWS)

Your business obtains drinking water from a public water service (i.e. municipal water or a PWS).



Submit a **recent copy of the water bill** with your RIDOH application as proof of a PWS connection.

### On-Site Well

Your business is served by an on-site well that has a **RIDOH PWS License**.



Submit a copy of the **RIDOH PWS License**.

Your business is served by an on-site well that **does not have a RIDOH PWS License**.



A PWS is required by law in order to operate your business if you use water for one or more of the following activities:

- Food preparation and/or washing of food contact surfaces and/or utensils;
- Human consumption, including handwashing in a public restroom for at least 25 people (customers and/or employees) daily for at least 60 days per year; or
- At least 15 service connections.

An on-site well may not be able to meet this requirement.



Contact the RIDOH Center for Drinking Water Quality for guidance at **401-222-6867** or [DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov](mailto:DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov)

## Determine Your Type of Wastewater Treatment System

### Public Sewer System

Your business discharges wastewater into a public sewage system (i.e. municipal or Narragansett Bay Commission).



Submit a **recent copy of the sewer bill** as proof of a public sewer connection.

### NEW On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) or "Septic System"

Your business will discharge wastewater into a **NEWLY** constructed and conformed OWTS.



Submit a copy of the **DEM "approved" "OWTS Construction Permit Application"** and the **RIDEM "Certificate of Conformance"** with your RIDOH application.

### EXISTING On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) or "Septic System"

Your business discharges wastewater into an **EXISTING** OWTS.



Submit a copy of your **"DEM System Suitability Determination (SSD) Approval"** with your RIDOH application.



Your OWTS must have SSD approval. The existing OWTS must be adequately sized and "suitable" to treat the wastewater generated by the proposed business. Obtain an SSD application from DEM OWTS Permitting Program at [www.dem.ri.gov/septic](http://www.dem.ri.gov/septic)

### Cesspool

Your business discharges wastewater into a cesspool.



Cesspools are not allowed by law. Cesspools need to be eliminated and replaced with a new OWTS or connect to a sewer system (if applicable).

Contact DEM OWTS Permitting Program for guidance or visit [www.dem.ri.gov/septic](http://www.dem.ri.gov/septic) to get started.

