



Summer Village of Grandview

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Wastewater System

Frequently Asked Questions

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Answers

A. Once my municipal connection is done, what are the next steps to get my pump installed?

The following steps are required to connect to the Grandview wastewater system. Note: a two-chambered holding tank (or equivalent) is required.

1. Arrange to have three electrical circuits installed from your cottage electrical panel to the location where your control panel will be placed. (For details on electrical requirements, see Question B of FAQs.)
2. Paperwork: Send (or drop off) the following documents to the Summer Village Office:
 - a. Signed Utility Services Agreement with the Summer Village of Grandview.
 - b. Signed Work Order for THS Septic to proceed with your pump installation (if you chose to use THS as your pump installer).
3. After your electrical circuits are installed, contact THS Septic (email: thsseptic@gmail.com or phone: 1-403-844-2559) to advise that you are ready for pump installation. THS will notify you of the approximate date.
4. THS Septic will install your pump and control panel and then notify TKO Electric that your system is ready for wiring of the panel. **Note:** If your tank has fluid in the secondary chamber, you will require a pump-out prior to the pump installation.
5. TKO Electric will install and connect the control panel and the GFCI outlet. Afterwards, if you obtained a Homeowner's electrical permit, call Superior Safety Codes in Red Deer (1-403-358-5545) to arrange for the final electrical inspection. After the inspection has been done, turn on the new circuits in your cottage electrical panel.

Caution: Your system is not operational yet. Until it is commissioned, the floats are not set up, the CC valve remains closed, the high- and low-level alarms are disabled, and power to the pump is turned off. Do not attempt to run the pump manually as it could cause the pump to burn out.

6. You will receive an invoice from THS Septic for the work they have done. This invoice must be paid before the final pump commissioning will be done.
7. After receiving a copy of the final inspection report from Superior Safety Codes, the Summer Village Office will notify THS Septic that your pump is approved to be commissioned.
8. You are responsible for monitoring the fluid level in your tank until the pump is commissioned. When it is sufficient to raise the two lower floats to the "up" position, contact a member of Council to advise that your system is ready for commissioning. **Note:** The topmost float (for the high-level alarm) does not have to be in the "up position." Your Council members will assist in monitoring tank levels if requested.
9. THS Septic will notify you when they are coming to commission the system. Once they are done, your system will be operational. **Note:** commissioning of the system and operating your CC valve are to be done only by authorized personnel.

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B. What electrical work is required before I can have my pump installed?

The following circuits are needed for your wastewater system:

- One 20-amp circuit to power your pump (dedicated circuit required).
- One 15-amp circuit to power your control panel (dedicated circuit recommended).
- One 15-amp circuit with a GFCI receptacle on a 4x4 post near your tank to power any future accessories that may be needed, such as heat tape. If you have an electrical receptacle near your tank, you may not require this circuit.

You can hire a contractor to install these circuits, or if you are qualified, do the work yourself.

If you are considering doing your own electrical work, see Question C.

An electrical permit from Superior Safety Codes is required for this work. The homeowner may obtain this permit, which will cover both the work done by the homeowner and the future connection of the control panel done by TKO Electric. If another contractor is doing the installation of the circuits, two electrical permits may be required. (Ask your contractor if he/she will work under your homeowner permit.)

Your control panel can be mounted beside your cottage or beside your tank. Follow the sequence below that matches your chosen location.

Note: Standard practice in Grandview is to mount the control panel with the face visible from the street, if possible, to be seen easily in case of an alarm situation.

For a Control Panel Next to Your Cottage

1. Install a 4x4 mounting post next to the building (recommended height: 3-4 feet).
Note: The panel can be attached directly to the building, but if it is, you may hear a click of the electrical relay whenever the pump kicks in.
2. Install a 4x4 post approximately 6 inches from the secondary riser of your holding tank for the GFCI receptacle (recommended height: about 2 feet above ground).
3. Route the 20-amp pump circuit and the 15-amp control panel circuit from your cottage electrical panel to the control panel location.
4. Run a 1½-inch electrical conduit underground from the panel to the tank. (TKO Electric will pass a bundle of wires through this conduit to connect the panel to the pump and floats.)
5. Route the other 15-amp circuit from your cottage to the receptacle post. This wire does not need to go to the control panel, but it can go in the same trench as the conduit.

For a Control Panel Next to Your Tank

1. Install a 4x4 post approximately 6 inches from the secondary riser of your holding tank (recommended height: 3 - 4 feet above ground). This post will support the control panel (above) and a GFCI receptacle (below).
2. Route the 20-amp pump circuit and the two 15-amp circuits from your cottage electrical panel (underground) to the mounting post. The three underground-rated electrical wires can be left at the unfilled end of the trench near the base of the post. After the pump installation, TKO will connect these wires to the control panel and install the GFCI receptacle.

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C. Can I do my own electrical work?

In Alberta, it is permissible for a homeowner to do wiring on his/her own property. If you opt to install your own electrical circuits, you must do all of the following:

1. Obtain a Homeowner's Electrical Permit from Superior Safety Codes, Red Deer (phone 1-403-358-5545, website: www.superiorsafetycodes.com). Send your signed application form to mfoster@superiorsafetycodes.com
2. Before you dig, contact Alberta One Call to have utility lines marked.
3. When running wire, leave approximately 30 inches of extra wire at any point where the installers will be making connections.
4. Follow all electrical codes.
5. After TKO has connected your pump and control panel, contact Superior Safety Codes to arrange a final electrical inspection. (phone 1-403-358-5545, or visit <https://secure.superiorsafetycodes.com/requests>). This is a required step before your pump can be commissioned.

Note: TKO Electric will be supplying the GFCI receptacle.

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D. Can I choose my own installer to put my pump in?

The Summer Village is recommending the proposal from THS Septic for the installation of pumps, control panels and related equipment, and for the commissioning of the pumps. If you wish to use a different installer, you may. You will need to do all of the following:

1. Get a certificate from a Trustee of the Hamblin Trust in order to pick up from the supplier the equipment package that the Hamblin Trust has purchased on your behalf. Your Councillors are all Trustees.
2. Accept full responsibility for the installation including plumbing and electrical permitting and inspection.
3. Ensure that the work is done by a qualified wastewater installer certified for confined space entry.
4. Ensure that the electrical hookup is done by a qualified electrician who is knowledgeable on the wiring of the control panel.
5. Ensure that the installation meets all design specifications of the Summer Village of Grandview including the provision of an adequate frost plug.
6. Ensure final plumbing and electrical inspections have been arranged with Superior Safety Codes. After the Summer Village Office receives the final inspection reports, the Village will provide authorization for the CC valve to be opened. The CC valve can only be opened by a certified plumber with authorization from the Summer Village.

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E. Can I choose a different pump or other equipment?

The pumps, control panels and related equipment must be the Orenco STEP system.

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F. How much of the cost of my system will be paid by the Hamblin Trust?

The Hamblin Trust has allocated \$3077 for the purchase of a pump package for each residence. If costs rise on this equipment, residents will be responsible for any additional charges.

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G. How do I get the equipment that the Hamblin Trust is buying for me?

If you opt for THS Septic and Civil Solutions to install your pump and panel, THS will pick up all of the necessary equipment from the distributor and the Hamblin Trust will pay directly. If you opt for a different installer, see a member of Council to arrange for the payment for the pump. In this case, the homeowner will have to arrange to pick up the pump.

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H. How is the COVID-19 situation affecting progress with hookups?

Pump installations have been temporarily suspended by THS Septic due to the COVID-19 crisis. THS will advise when they are able to go ahead with installations, and an update will be provided on the Grandview website.

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I. When are the deadlines for hooking up to the municipal system?

In view of the COVID-19 crisis, the wastewater bylaw has been amended to provide additional time for service connections to be made to tanks. The date for all septic fields to be decommissioned is now October 21, 2020, and the date for service connections to be made is now October 25, 2021.

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J. What do I need to know about using my system?

Lot owners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their on-lot Orenco Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) wastewater systems. To ensure trouble-free operation, you must be careful what goes down your toilet. Only septic system friendly toilet paper should be used. Any non-soluble materials, such as disposable diapers, antiseptic wipes, or personal hygiene products, will clog your pump filter, potentially shutting down your system. For the same reason, use of garburators is prohibited by our Wastewater Bylaw. Other prohibited practices include dumping fat, grease, or chemicals down the sink. Sump pumps and rain water cannot be directed to the wastewater system. Such materials can interfere with the natural bacterial action in your septic tank.

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K. What is a CC Valve, and what should I know about it?

A CC valve (commonly called a curb cock) is the underground valve on the line that connects your on-lot system to the municipal wastewater line. It is to be operated only by an authorized wastewater technician. A CC valve can be turned off to isolate a property for maintenance or repairs. The recommendation is to leave the CC valves open during the winter. If you want your CC valve closed while you are away and reopened when you return, contact THS Septic. There is a charge for this service. If your CC valve is closed, your pump should be turned off and your control panel left on (for alarms to remain active).

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L. What is a frost plug, and what should I know about it?

A frost plug is a foam disc that fits snugly in the top of the pump basin to insulate the internal piping from freezing. For winter operation, a frost plug is imperative. If you wish to remove this plug, do not pull directly up on the rope handle. Instead, push one side down and remove while the disc is in a vertical position. Note that the plastic pipe provided on these frost plugs is not a handle; it acts as a washer to prevent the rope from being pulled through the foam and is placed on the bottom of the frost plug.

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M. What is heat tape, and what should I know about it?

Heat tape (or heat trace) is electrical cord that gets warm when power is run through it. It can be used on plumbing pipes exposed to the cold to prevent the contents from freezing. With most shallow tanks in Grandview, THS Septic fitted heat tape when installing the pump. If you feel you need to add this feature, you can get heat tape in lengths of 8 or 10 feet at most hardware stores.

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N. What additional options are should I consider?

- **Wastewater backup insurance:** Discuss with your insurance provider the coverage provided by your policy for sewer backup and decide if additional insurance is needed.
- **Wastewater backflow valve:** The Plumbing Code now requires this valve in new developments, but they can also be retrofitted in existing buildings if desired. The valve allows flow in one direction only, preventing effluent from entering the home. A backflow valve requires periodic maintenance. If you are interested in this option, discuss the installation details with a plumber.
- **Tank high-level alarm systems:** If you wish, you can have your high-level alarm connected to your cottage alarm system or to your phone or home computer (through the Internet).
- **Maintenance for the on-lot wastewater system:** Your Village Council is currently exploring system maintenance options for residents. For most lots, it is felt that no maintenance will be required in 2020.

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O. What is that black pipe beside pump basin, and can I use it for an RV dump?

The vertical pipe next to your pump basin is a cleanout pipe. It provides an access point to clear a possible blockage in the pipe that connects your pump basin to the main holding tank. Do not dump raw sewage in this pipe as it will go directly into the pump basin. Raw sewage needs to go into the primary tank.

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P. What should I do if I hear an alarm?

If you hear an alarm on your control panel or a neighbour's, you will need to take proper action. The alarm signals either a low level or a high level in the tank, indicating a possible mechanical problem. This is not an emergency but needs to be addressed.

The recommended actions are:

- Press the red button on the front of the control panel to silence the alarm. It will remain silenced for 12 hours, but the red light will continue to be lit. If you silence an alarm, notify a member of Council.
- If this is not your property, contact the homeowner or a member of Council (numbers below)
- If you require advice on next steps, you can contact a member of Council for suggestions or THS for a service call. (THS will charge for the callout unless it is a warranty issue. Fees may apply for after-hours/weekend/holiday callouts.)

Note: Getting your tank pumped out by a vacuum truck when your system is operational can initiate a low-level alarm. This alarm does not indicate a problem with your system, but it still requires some corrective action, which may be as simple as pouring some water into the secondary tank to lift the low-level alarm float.

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Q. What should I do if I spot a sewage leak?

It is very unlikely that a spill will occur, but we want to be prepared. If you notice any sewage effluent on the ground, take the following actions immediately:

- Call the emergency number for THS (business hours: 403-844-2559; after hours: 403-844-9233, 403-844-0907) and provide the exact location (nearest street address), time of call, and description of your observations.
 - Notify a member of Council or the Summer Village Office and advise if THS has been notified. Summer Village Office: 780-586-2424. Councillor numbers are in the next section.

Note: During an emergency situation, some residential pumps may need to be turned off temporarily. In such a case, reduce your water consumption so as not to exceed the emergency storage capacity of your tank.

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R. Who can I call if I have a question not answered here?

Please do not contact THS with questions about the connection process. If you cannot find the answer to your question in this document, you can call a member of your Village Council. During the start-up phase of our wastewater project, members of Council are available to assist homeowners in making decisions on their particular installations and to help troubleshoot any operational difficulties. Councillors are not wastewater experts and therefore cannot provide technical advice or to make repairs, but they can answer questions and suggest options.

Summer Village of Grandview Councillors

- Don Davidson 403-860-1050
- Hugh Read 780-221-9357
- Ken Lewis 780-919-7967

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