

Cayuga County Health Department  
Environmental Health Division

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Realty Subdivisions

1. **What approvals do I need to create a realty subdivision?** You should contact the municipality in which the property is located for their approval requirements. If the subdivision meets the definition of a Health Department defined subdivision, you will also need approval from the Cayuga County Health Department. The Cayuga County Health Department can be reached at 253-1405 for questions regarding their requirements. You may also need to obtain a storm water permit from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) depending upon how much land will be disturbed in the development of the subdivision. In addition, if public sewers are planned for the subdivision you will need to obtain approval from NYSDEC. NYSDEC can be reached at 426-7500.
2. **What is a Health Department defined subdivision?** Article 11, Title II of the Public Health Law defines a realty subdivision as one that has five or more lots that are five acres or smaller in size.
3. **What does the Health Department need in order to approve a subdivision?** The Health Department requires that a design professional (either a NYS Professional Engineer or Registered Architect) prepare plans showing how adequate water and sewage systems will be provided. A checklist is available in Useful Documents of this website that lists all the specific requirements of the Health Department.
4. **What is required if a public sewer is proposed for a subdivision?** A design professional must submit a plan to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) (426-7500) showing the proposed sewer system for their approval. Once NYSDEC approves the plan, they will forward their approval to the Cayuga County Health Department.
5. **What is required if septic systems are proposed for a subdivision?** A design professional must submit a plan showing a septic system design for every lot of the proposed subdivision. Every lot must have percolation test data as well as a deep test hole soil evaluation performed.
6. **Are alternative septic systems allowed for a subdivision?** No, plans showing alternative septic systems as defined in Appendix 75A of 10NYCRR will not be approved. Only conventional septic systems will be allowed in a subdivision.
7. **What is required if private wells are proposed for a subdivision?** One test well must be installed by a NYSDEC registered well driller for every 10 subdivision lots. Yield tests must be performed and the wells sampled for a number of parameters. These parameters are outlined in the checklist that is available in Useful Documents of this website.

8. **What is required if public water is proposed for a subdivision?** A design professional must submit a plan to the Cayuga County Health Department showing the details of the proposed public water system.
9. **When is it required to have a public sewer system instead of septic systems?** When a subdivision is located in an existing sewer district or is reasonably accessible to an existing sewer district, or when the proposed subdivision, including all phases, consists of 50 lots or more or 200 or more residents, a public sewer system is required. In addition, if the soil percolation rate is slower than 60 min/inch, a public sewer is required.
10. **When is it required to have a public water system instead of individual wells?** When a subdivision is located in an existing water district or is reasonably accessible to an existing water district, or when the proposed subdivision, including all phases, consists of 50 lots or more or 200 or more residents, a public water system is required. In addition, if the individual wells cannot provide an average yield of at least 5 gpm, or if the water is contaminated, a public water system is required.
11. **Is it required to go through the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process?** Yes, as part of the approval process a Health Department defined subdivision must undergo the SEQRA requirements as a Type I action. The municipality (e.g. Town Board) typically acts as the Lead Agency to review the environmental assessment.
12. **What are the requirements regarding stormwater?** New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has specific requirements regarding stormwater that must be addressed. Some of these requirements include having a design professional prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and then filing a Notice of Intent to NYSDEC. The Health Department requires that the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan be reviewed by the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District. For further information and specific details regarding their requirements, NYSDEC can be reached at 426-7500.