

# Hamilton Board of Health

## FAQ: Can I Build an Addition on my House? Can I add a bedroom?

Multi-step process to answer these questions....

### 1) Determine if minimum setbacks are met.

	Septic Tank, Holding Tank, Pump Chamber, Treatment Unit, Grease Traps	Soil Absorption System
Cellar or Crawl Space Wall, foundation drain	10'	20'
Slab Foundation (slab at or above grade)	10'	10'

### 2) Adding rooms or just enlarging existing rooms?

- a) If just enlarging existing rooms, and if setbacks are met, contact a Licensed Title 5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection.

If Title 5 inspection passes, and setbacks met, HBOH will allow addition, by signing-off on building permit application, showing required setbacks between septic and building are provided.

- b) Adding a Room

- i) These aren't counted as rooms for septic system sizing. ("Non-Rooms")

Bathroom	Unfinished Basement
Unheated Attic	Mud Room
Laundry Room	Foyer
Pantry	WIC
Storage Room (No Windows)	

If adding one or more of these "non-rooms" (above) and if set backs are met, contact a Licensed Title5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection.

If Title 5 inspection passes, and setbacks met, HBOH will allow addition, by signing-off on building permit application, showing required setbacks between septic and building are provided.

- ii) If room addition is one of the following, count all existing and proposed "Rooms", for example:

Living	Dining
Kitchen	Bedroom
Family Room	Office
Library	Sunroom
Etc.	

When counting rooms, an open LR, DR, and kitchen are counted as 2 rooms: DR/kitchen are one room/ function, and LR is another room/function, per long-standing HBOH written policy. (See attached Policy Concerning "Open" Floor Plans).

- iii) Determine if total number of rooms proposed will exceed septic "design flow", first by counting total rooms. (See rooms vs non-rooms, listed above.)
  - a. If total room count is 8 or less, count bedrooms. A room could be considered a bedroom if it is 70 sf or larger, has privacy, at least one "egress" window, and a closet. Multiply each bedroom by 110 gpd to find minimum design flow required.
  - b. If total room count is 9 or more, count rooms (see rooms vs non-rooms, listed above). Septic design flow is based on total room count, divided by 2, round down, multiply by 110 gpd.
- iv) Review Hamilton Board of Assessors "property card" for number of rooms and bedrooms existing.
- v) Determine the "design flow" of existing septic system.
  - Located on septic plan and permit.
  - Plan and Permit are available at HBOH office.
- vi) If septic plan and permit indicate sufficient size to add bedrooms (or rooms), then:
  - Submit a "Request for Confirmation" to HBOH
- vii) When Confirmation returned to you, contact a Licensed Title 5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection.
- viii) If all setbacks are met, inspection passes, and septic system sized for added bedrooms or rooms, HBOH will allow added bedrooms, by signing-off on building permit application.

**What if the "design flow" does not allow for added bedroom (or room)?**

Consult with a septic system design engineer to determine whether there are options available to expand or replace the septic system in order to add bedrooms (or 9+ rooms) to this property.

**Request for Confirmation – Septic System Design Flow**

To Hamilton Board of Health:

Please confirm the septic system at:

\_\_\_\_\_ Address

Is approved for \_\_\_\_\_ of bedrooms +/- or \_\_\_\_\_ gpd.  
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Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

Please Circle: Owner / Realtor / Property Buyer / Other

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Hamilton Board of Health File Review: \_\_\_\_\_

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Confirmed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Leslie Whelan, RS  
Health Agent

