

# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Building in Aitkin County

## DID YOU KNOW?

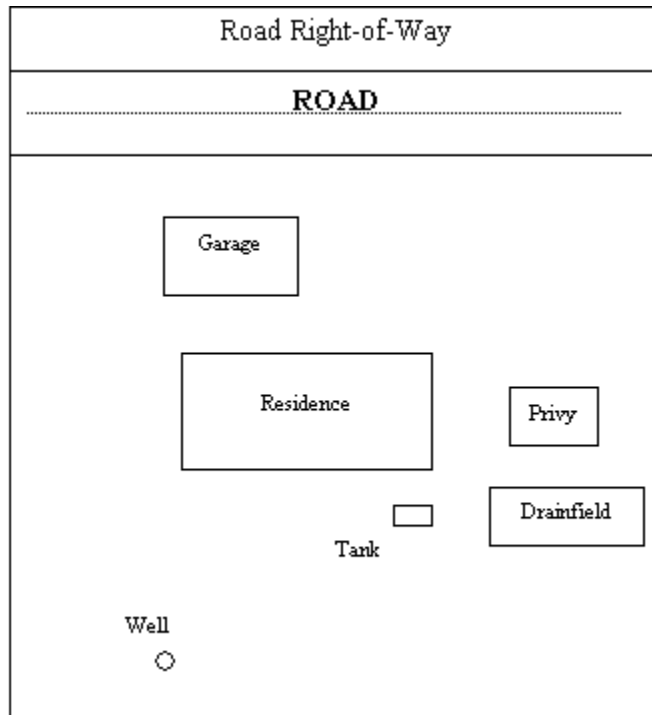
- **Aitkin County requires, by Ordinance, that you acquire a “Zoning Permit” prior to placement of any structure (including decks), or installation of an individual sewage treatment system on a parcel of land. A minimum of two weeks must be allowed for processing a completed application.**
- If you wish to add-on to an existing structure that is less than the required setback from the lake, property line, or road you would need to apply for a variance.
- A mobile home is considered a structure.
- Shoreland property is land that is within 1,000 feet of a lake, 500 feet from the Mississippi River or 300 feet from other river or stream or the land ward extent of the floodplain whichever is greater.
- The state of Minnesota requires that you apply for an “Electrical Permit” if you are going to be doing any electrical work—check with your local electric company for information.
- There are 3 classifications of lakes in Aitkin County:
  - (GD) General Development
  - (RD) Recreational Development
  - (NE) Natural Environment
- Septic systems today require a sealed tank with a conforming drainfield.
- The bottom of a drainfield must be three (3) feet above the water table.
- The Zoning Office does inspect ALL septic systems including outhouses and when in conformance issue Certificates of Compliance.
- The State of Minnesota Statutes required that all septic systems be in conformance by 1977.
- A permit is valid for one (1) year.
- Variances, Conditional Use Permits, and Rezonings require public hearings.
- Aitkin County requires that sewer contractors be licensed to install septic systems.
- **THAT VIOLATIONS OF THE AITKIN COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE ARE SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION!!**

## **ORDINARY HIGH WATER LEVEL OR REAR PROPERTY LINE**

1. Be sure to show distances from property lines, roads, lakes, or rivers. (All proposed structures, septic system, road right-of-ways and property lines must be clearly staked.)
2. Be sure to show distances of septic system from well, residence, road, and also side property line.
3. Also include the depth of the well.
4. The elevation of the property is very important in regard to the septic system and privy (outhouse).

This type of drawing is required in the application for a permit.

**SAMPLE DRAWING**



Brought to you by:  
Aitkin County Planning & Zoning and  
Environmental Services  
209 Second Street NW  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
PH: (218)927-7342  
FX: (218)927-4372

Answers to Your Questions About Building in Aitkin County

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**Summary of Shoreland Zoning and Platting Standards**

Aitkin County Lakes are classified by the DNR as General Development (GD), Recreational Development (RD), or Natural Environment (NE) Lakes.

For new Plats: Lot sizes should be as follows:

<u>Class:</u>	<u>Area:</u>	<u>Waterline Width:</u>
GD	20,000 sq ft	100 feet
RD	40,000 sq ft	150 feet
NE	80,000 sq ft	200 feet

Substandard Lots: All lots that do not meet the minimum lot area, length of water frontage, structural setbacks or other dimensional standards are classified as "Substandard Lots"

Lots of record in the County Recorder's Office prior to the date of enactment of the County Ordinance (prior to 1992), which do not meet the above requirements will be allowed as building sites. But structural setbacks must be met.

**Minimum Building Setback from Lake:**

GD 75 feet from ordinary high water level  
RD 100 feet from ordinary high water level  
NE 150 feet from ordinary high water level

**Road Setbacks:**

50 feet from the right-of-way of Federal, State, or County Highways  
30 feet from the right-of-way of Township or other minor roads

**Side Location:**

All structures (including decks and overhang) are to be 10 feet from the lot line in Shoreland areas and 20 feet outside the Shoreland area.

**BLUFFS:** 30 feet

Variances for building locations may be allowed upon appeal to the Board of Adjustment, provided a hardship situation exists.

**SEWAGE AND WASTE DISPOSAL:**

Setback of Soil Absorption Systems from ordinary high water level:

GD Lakes, Rivers, or Streams 75 feet  
RD Lakes 75 feet  
NE Lakes 150 feet

<u>Distance From:</u>	<u>Septic Tanks</u>	<u>Drainfields</u>
Lot Line	10 feet	10 feet
Structures	10 feet	20 feet
Deep Well (50'+)	50 feet	50 feet
Shallow Well (49'-)	50 feet	100 feet

<u>Minimum Size</u>	<u>Septic Tank</u>	<u>Drainfields</u>
1-2 bedroom	1000 gallon	
3 bedroom	1000 gallon	*Size determined by
4 bedroom	1000 gallon	type of soil &
5 bedroom	1500 gallon	percolation data

Soil absorption systems shall not be acceptable under the following conditions:

- 1) Low swampy areas.
- 2) Areas where the known groundwater table is within 3 feet of the bottom of the soil absorption system.
- 3) Areas of exposed bedrock.
- 4) Soil where the percolation rate is slower than 1 inch in 120 minutes.
- 5) Areas of ground slope where there is danger of seepage to the surface

Alternate systems of sewage disposal, such as holding tanks, electric or gas incinerators, tertiary plant, shall be allowed subject to the standards of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Health.

[Location of Well: Check with a licensed contractor of MDH]

**PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR:**

- 1) Sewage disposal systems, when altered, extended, or installed.
  - 2) All buildings, whether accessory, agricultural, residential, or commercial (including decks).
- Permits are granted by the County Zoning Administrator or his authorized representative.

**EACH PERMIT SHALL HAVE:**

- 1) Correct legal description.
- 2) Soil testing information for sewage disposal system.
- 3) A drawing of the site in reasonable scale (overview) showing location of existing and proposed building(s), plans of the proposed or existing sewage treatment system and well, the name of the person or firm installing the septic system. (All structures, septic system, road right-of-ways and property lines must be clearly staked on the property.)

NOTE: Aitkin County requires that all sewer contractors be certified and licensed by the MPCA and registered with Aitkin County—If you hire a contractor who is not licensed, your system cannot be approved. If you need any information on building or installing a septic system, contact: Aitkin County Zoning, 209 Second Street NW, Aitkin, MN 56431. (218) 927-7342.

**WELL WATER TESTING:**

The Aitkin County Environmental Services does well water testing. We test for coliform and for nitrates. In order to have a test done, you may pick up a water testing kit from Planning and Zoning or you may send a self-addressed envelope to:

Aitkin County Planning and Zoning  
209 Second Street NW  
Aitkin, MN 56431

**\* Water sampling is done Monday and Tuesdays only excluding Holidays!**

**AITKIN COUNTY LAKESHORE CLASSIFICATION:**

<u>Name of Lake</u>	<u>Township</u>
<b>(General Development)</b>	
Big Sandy	Shamrock
Hill	Hill Lake
Mille Lacs	Hazelton, Lakeside, & Malmø
Minnewawa	Shamrock
<b>(Recreational Development)</b>	
Aitkin	Turner
Ball Bluff	Cornish
Big Pine	Wagner
Cedar	Farm Island & Aitkin
Clear	Glen
Dam	Glen & Kimberly
Diamond	Farm Island
Elm Island	Nordland
Esquagamah	Waukenabo & Unorg 49-27
Farm Island	Farm Island & Hazelton
Fleming	Fleming
Glacier	Turner
Gun	Fleming

Hammal	Farm Island
Hanging Kettle	Farm Island
Hickory	Farm Island
Horseshoe	Shamrock
Island	Haugen
Jenkins	Fleming
Lone	Nordland
Long	Glen
Moulton	Unorg 49-27
Nord	Nordland
Pine	Wagner
Pine, Big	Hazelton
Pine, Little	Farm Island
Rabbit	Glen
Rat	Workman
Ripple	Farm Island & Nordland
Rock	Jevne
Round	Haugen & Shamrock
Round	Waukenabo
Round	Hazelton
Sandy River	Shamrock & Workman
Section 12	Nordland
Sissabagamah	Nordland & Spencer
Spirit	Farm Island
Sugar	Glen & Malmo
Sunset	Farm Island
Tame Fish	Hazelton
Thornton	Farm Island
Townline	Farm Island
Vanduse	Ball Bluff
Waukenabo	Waukenabo
Wilkins	Fleming
Wladimiraf	Nordland

\*\*ANY LAKES NOT DESIGNATED IN THE LAKESHORE CLASSIFICATION LIST  
ARE CONSIDERED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT