

Are there exemptions from Connecting to the System?

- **Septic Exemption.**

- Indiana law provides certain property owners who would otherwise be required to connect to a sewer system an optional and limited exemption, if additional conditions are met. More specifically, Indiana Code Section 13-26-5-2.5(b) provides that you, as a potentially affected property owner, may qualify for an exemption to being required to connect to the District's system if:

1. The septic tank soil absorption system was new at the time that it was installed;
2. The septic tank soil absorption system was approved in writing by the local health department;
3. You provide the District with your written notice of potential qualification for the exemption and your desire to claim the same **within sixty (60) days of the date of this notice**, which serves as notice of such exemption; and
4. You, at your own expense, obtain and provide to the District, within one hundred twenty (120) days of the District's receipt of your written notification of potential exemption, a certification from the local health department (or the department's designee) that the septic tank soil absorption system is not failing pursuant to Indiana Law.

- The initial septic tank soil absorption system exemption is limited to ten (10) years beginning on the date of the written determination that the septic tank soil absorption system is not failing ("Initial Exemption"). If you qualify for the Initial Exemption, then you may be able to qualify for two (2) additional five (5) year exemptions upon the expiration of the Initial Exemption. If, at any time, you fail to qualify for any of the previously mentioned requirements, then you will be required to connect to the District's sewer system.
- Once the District finalizes its permitting process, you will be give notice by mail of your exemptions rights stated above.

- **10 Acre Exemption.**

- Any property that is located on at least ten (10) acres may also qualify for an exemption for connection if:
1. The owner can demonstrate the availability of at least two areas on the property for the collection and treatment of sewage that will protect human health and the environment;
 2. The waste stream from the property is limited to domestic sewage from a residence or business;
 3. The system used to collect and treat the domestic sewage has a maximum design flow of seven hundred fifty (750) gallons per day;

4. The owner, at the owner's expense, obtains and provides to the District a certification from the local health department or the department's designee that the system is functioning satisfactorily.

The 10 Acre exemption does not have a timeline to apply, however the 10 acres must one parcel and you cannot combine adjacent parcels (unless legally combined with the County) to total 10 acres.

Should I use an exemption if I'm eligible?

- While you may be eligible for an exemption from the connection requirement, there are at least three reasons why connecting your property to the sewer system will be an advantage to you:
 1. Property value: The experience in this District and other regional sewer districts has been that the value of real property goes up significantly when the owner connects the property to a public sewer and ceases to use a private septic tank soil absorption system;
 2. Mitigated costs: Septic tank soil absorption systems fail, and exemptions expire. When either occurs, the property owner will be required to connect to the sewer system. At that point, he or she will face costs;
 3. Enhanced quality of life: Persons who rely on septic tank soil absorption systems frequently are limited in the amount of water they may use because their septic tank soil absorption systems can process only so much flow each day. That limitation, in turn, restricts the use of such conveniences as garbage disposals, dishwashers, and washing machines or the number of people who occupy a property. Connection to a public sewer system usually eliminates those restrictions and allows the owner to enjoy his or her home to greater degree or for longer periods of time.
- More importantly, the impact of connection on nearby bodies of water will become apparent. The lakes, rivers, and streams from which you draw your drinking water or in which you fish, swim, and play often become clearer. Please keep these advantages in mind as you weigh the decision whether to seek an exemption.