

Change to Title 13 – Sewer Connections

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1. Clarifies permitted use of Onsite Septic Systems
2. Provides consistency on distance (200') and time (60 days) related to requirement to connect
3. Revises Deferral Process
4. Eliminates charges and credits formerly associated with deferrals
5. Clarifies requirements for decommissioning onsite septic systems

Sewer Connection Deferrals

A deferral may be granted with the approval of the City Manager if:

1. The property has only residential use; and
2. The existing on-site septic system is working properly and has a current Whatcom County Health Department approval and all other permits required by law; and
3. The owner(s) sign a Connection Deferral Agreement on a form provided by the City. This agreement provides certification by the property owner of the above conditions.

Hearing Examiner hears appeals to decision (BMC 17.06.180A)

Sewer Connection Deferral Agreements

1. This agreement requires the property owner(s) to connect to the public sanitary sewer system within **60 days** of any of the following conditions occurring:
 - a. Failure of the on-site septic system
 - b. Sale of the property; or
 - c. Repairs, reconstruction or improvements are made to the occupied building structure which exceed 50% of the assessed value of the structure prior to such repairs, reconstruction or improvements.
2. Requires payment of all connection charges at the time of actual connection
3. Recorded with the Whatcom County Auditor's Office

Sewer Connection Requirements – Whatcom County Comparison

	Distance from public sewer main triggering requirement to connect	Time allowed for required connection once notice is provided	Other conditions
Bellingham	200’*	Not specified	
Blaine	200’**	180 days	Five-year deferral available for working septic systems
Ferndale	200’***	Must connect immediately if septic system fails or improvements exceeding 50% of market value occur	
Lynden	300’	90 days	Can continue to use a working septic – but no repairs or revisions
Sumas	200’	30 days	

*except all properties within the Lake Whatcom watershed, which must connect to public sewer

**500’ for public facilities

***300’ for high recharge areas, based on Critical Areas Map