

How is a sanitary code implemented?

Issuance of permits or licenses are usually handled through the county administrative agency such as the county health department, planning and zoning office, or the county clerk.

Construction plan review and inspections are usually handled by the environmental sanitarian.

How is a sanitary code enforced?

The vast majority of compliance with sanitary code requirements is voluntary. Noncompliance is handled through the county's normal enforcement channels, which are established and described in the code.

Can the Sanitary Code be expanded to address other environmental issues?

Yes! The initial code can be amended and expanded to address many nonpoint sources of pollution, including household hazardous waste, illegal trash dumping, livestock confinement, and nuisance conditions. The establishment of wellhead protection areas for public water supplies is another powerful mechanism that can be utilized in sanitary codes.

For more information or if you have questions about the sanitary code please contact:

- Your local Health or Environmental Department—look under county government in the phone book.
- K-State Research and Extension, Dept. of Biological and Agricultural Engineering — 237 Seaton Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. (785) 532-5813.
- KDHE, Division of Environment, Bureau of Water, Nonpoint Source Section — Bldg. 283, Forbes Field, Topeka, KS 66620. (785) 296-4195.

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PROTECT DRINKING WATER

EMPOWERING LOCAL DECISION MAKERS

I N K A N S A S

THE County Sanitary Code



**A TOOL TO HELP
ASSURE QUALITY OF LIFE
IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

What is a sanitary code?

A sanitary code is a body of rules and regulations formally adopted by resolution by the county commission. It establishes standards for location and construction of private water well and wastewater disposal systems including proper disposal of seepage. The code also establishes a system for permitting and inspecting private wells and wastewater systems.

Improperly constructed private wells may allow contaminants free access to drinking water. Poorly designed, constructed or maintained onsite wastewater systems may easily contaminate groundwater or surface waters. County sanitary code requirements and minimum standards can significantly reduce potential health and environmental hazards resulting from these systems.

Guidelines addressing subdivision water and wastewater development are always included in the initial base code.

How is a sanitary code developed?

A code development committee comprised of individuals representing a broad array of interests is appointed by the county commission. Contractors, developers, real estate agents, farmers, homeowners, bankers, health department personnel, other public officials, and any other group that would be affected by the code should be asked to serve on this committee.

This committee assesses local environmental conditions, and, in consultation with the county residents and advisors, drafts sanitary code provisions that address specific needs for that county. The hallmark of an effective

county code is that it is tailored for specific local conditions. It should not be more stringent or less stringent than needed to produce the desired end result — protection of human health and the environment.

What are the benefits of a sanitary code?

- Prevention of public health risks from bacteria, viruses, nitrate, and other impairments.
- Protection of both groundwater and surface water resources.
- Contractors price and install private water and wastewater systems more uniformly and effectively when local code standards are in place.
- Helps promote sound economic development of land and water resources in the county.

- Homeowners are more likely to receive a properly designed and constructed system when code construction standards, permitting and inspection requirements are specified.
- Provides the basis for effective local management of many nonpoint sources of pollution that are not addressed by state programs.
- Property values can be preserved or enhanced.
- Property that has an adequate and safe water supply and functional wastewater treatment system is more valuable than property that does not have adequate water and wastewater facilities.

Can a sanitary code be amended when needed?

Yes! The sanitary code is dynamic and subject to modification to meet changing conditions. It should be reviewed and updated regularly. It is recommended that a code be reviewed every 3 or 4 years to ensure that its provisions are kept current.

