

REALTY ONE GROUP ULTIMATE

OHIO WATER WELL & SEPTIC (HSTS) TESTING COMPLIANCE MANUAL

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1. Overview for New Agents

In Ohio, real estate transactions involving a private water well system or a Household Sewage Treatment System (HSTS / Septic) are subject to rigid local board of health rules under home-rule authority. If a property is not on municipal city water and city sewer lines, managing these tests is a critical contract contingency. Skipping these steps or filing late can delay or void an entire real estate transaction.

2. Step-by-Step Field Instructions

Follow this exact operational sequence for every rural or suburban listing/purchase transaction:

- **Step 1: Check the Purchase Agreement Contingencies.** Locate the 'Well and Septic' addendum in your sales contract. Note who is responsible for the inspection costs (customarily the seller pays for the septic evaluation; the buyer usually pays for the well test, though this can be contractually altered). Note the strict performance deadlines (usually 14-21 days from acceptance).
- **Step 2: Identify the County and System Location.** Look up the property deed parcel data to verify the exact county health board jurisdiction. Never assume jurisdiction based on the mailing city address.
- **Step 3: Retrieve the System's Operation & Maintenance (O&M;) History.** Contact the local health board to pull the active history file on the specific property's system footprint. Check for any current outstanding citations, failed pump sheets, or delinquent local maintenance registration fees.
- **Step 4: Prepare the Physical Site for Inspection.** For septic evaluations, explicitly instruct the seller to have a registered service contractor fully expose/uncover the primary concrete access lids and distribution boxes. Health department officials will refuse to dig or perform tests on buried parts.
- **Step 5: Submit the Official Point-of-Sale (POS) Application.** Download the county-specific POS application form (available on their portals), attach the necessary fee (\$250 to \$400 depending on the county), and schedule the inspection time window.
- **Step 6: Facilitate the Physical Site Inspection.** Ensure all water fixtures are functioning. For septic checks, inspectors look at tank structural integrity, baffle conditions, soil absorption fields, and may perform a lateral line water dye test. For well checks, they draw direct samples from the pressure tank to analyze for coliform bacteria, E. coli, nitrates, and lead markers.
- **Step 7: Clear the Certificate or Establish Escrows.** If the system passes, the county issues a conditional transfer clearance certificate. If it fails, closing is halted until a repair/replacement plan is formally approved or an authorized repair escrow account (typically 125%-150% of an official engineering estimate) is executed with the title company.

3. Regional Health Department Contact Directory

County	Authority Office	Phone Line	Official Web Domain
Ashtabula	Ashtabula County Health Dept.	(440) 576-6010	ashtabulacountyhealth.com
Cuyahoga	Cuyahoga County Board of Health	(216) 201-2000	ccbh.net
Geauga	Geauga Public Health Office	(440) 279-1900	gphohio.org
Lake	Lake County General Health Dist.	(440) 350-2543	lcghd.org

Lorain	Lorain County Public Health	(440) 322-6367	loraincountyhealth.com
Mahoning	Mahoning County Public Health	(330) 270-2855	mahoninghealth.org
Medina	Medina County Health Department	(330) 723-9688	medinahealth.org
Portage	Portage County Health District	(330) 296-9919	portagehealth.net
Stark	Stark County Health Department	(330) 493-9904	starkcountyohio.gov
Summit	Summit County Public Health	(330) 923-4891	scph.org
Trumbull	Trumbull Co. Combined Health Dist.	(330) 675-2489	tcchd.org

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