

THINKING ABOUT ADDING A SECONDARY DWELLING UNIT ON YOUR PROPERTY?

In November 2016 the Routt County Board of Commissioners voted to modify the regulations that govern secondary dwelling units on property in unincorporated Routt County. In order to improve clarity with planning and development, the County has developed this reference guide that summarizes the requirements for secondary dwelling units.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

Secondary dwelling units in Routt County are subject to the following Planning Department regulations:

- Property must be zoned Agriculture/Forestry (A/F) or Mountain Residential Estates (MRE)
 - In order to determine the zoning of your property, [click here](#) and follow the steps, or contact the Planning Department at (970) 879-2704.
- Property must be at least 5 acres.
- The property currently must be vacant or have only one dwelling unit on it.
- The Secondary Dwelling Unit must be no larger than 800 square feet.
- Primary and secondary dwelling unit must be served by a driveway at least 16 feet wide.
- If your property is more than 5 acres but less than 35 acres, a secondary dwelling unit must be attached to the primary dwelling unit.
- If you have 35 acres or more, the secondary unit may be detached but must be within 300 feet of the primary unit.
- Parcels of 70 or more acres (Large Lot Administrative Approval). Development is allowed based upon one unit per 35 acres with a large lot administrative agreement. The secondary units must not exceed 2000 square feet in size.

DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES:

The Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR) recently released a guidance document ([Guideline 2016-1](#)) concerning water supplies for secondary dwelling units. This document is intended to lay out the DWR's stance on supplying water to prospective secondary dwelling units. Please get in touch with the local DWR office at (970) 879-0272 or at the above website to make sure your well or water rights can accommodate a secondary dwelling unit.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT:

- The applicant shall submit the required application for building permit complete with electronic plan submittal.
- Dwelling units in two-family dwellings shall be separated from each other by wall and/or floor assemblies having not less than a 1-hour fire-resistance rating (2-hour fire-resistance rating if adjacent to agricultural buildings or within a fire separation distance of same).
- Additional questions may be answered by contacting Building Department staff at (970) 870-5566.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

Routt County has adopted and incorporated State of Colorado regulations for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) that establish minimum standards for system location, design, construction, performance, installation, alteration and use.

- Secondary unit additions require review of existing OWTS to ensure setback requirements are met and that the existing system can accommodate increased flows.
- The OWTS must be replaced or modified to handle increased design flows unless it is determined the existing system is adequately designed and constructed for anticipated higher flows.
- Increased flows beyond the threshold of an existing system would require alterations such as an increase in tank capacity and expansion of existing soil treatment areas (leach fields), or in some cases completely new systems.
- Permits issued through the Department of Environmental Health shall be required for expanded use of an existing systems or new systems.
- Fees for Repair (modification) Permits are \$100. New systems require a \$300 fee.
- Additional questions may be answered by contacting Environmental Health Dept. staff at (970) 870- 5588.