

## UTILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES

An important point in selecting country real estate is its proximity to roads and highways. If frequent travel to a nearby town or city will be necessary, then easy access to paved roads will be a major selling factor. While the county is responsible for maintaining public roads, some roads may not be cleared or repaired as soon as others.

Utilities should also be a consideration when choosing a home-site. It should be remembered that natural gas is not available in all locations of the county.

A buyer should also look into fire protection. All rural fire protection is handled by volunteer fire fighters. As such, response time to an emergency may be longer. Fire insurance may also be higher depending on the distance from your house to the nearest fire station and/or hydrant.

## RURAL ADDRESSING

Pottawatomie County has an **ENHANCED**

**9-1-1 SYSTEM**, which requires that all structures be addressed with a physical site address and not a route and box number. An address is assigned at the time a building permit is obtained.

Our addressing system is based on a grid system of **800** numbers per mile. Numbers get bigger going east and north. County road maps are available from the GIS mapping department at (785) 457-3337, which show all road names and the address grid.

**Please remember to post your address so it is visible to all emergency vehicles.**

## RURAL CONFLICTS

Perhaps one of the biggest problems with living in the country is that you are in the **COUNTRY!** Be aware that you most probably will have country odors, dust, icy and snow blown roads to contend with. There may be times when you are without electricity for greater lengths of time than in a city.

And please remember, that if your reason for moving to the country is to get away from congestion and have plenty of open space, than you should not buy in a developing area. Too many times people will purchase a small lot or acreage in an area of the county that is rapidly growing and then complain when surrounding property is zoned for more development. The county has adopted a comprehensive plan, which shows the areas slated for future development. Please check this plan so that you are aware of what the future holds for the land around you.

Building in the country may be your dream. Just be sure to check the location out first, so that it does not become your nightmare!



## PURCHASING RURAL LAND

A guide to what you should be aware of when purchasing land for your dream home in rural areas of Pottawatomie County.



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# PURCHASING RURAL LAND

## PREFACE

When someone decides to leave the city and build or purchase a home in the country, it's easy to get caught up in the excitement and anticipation of the move. The attraction of the privacy, prestige and aesthetic beauty of life in the country often blinds the buyer to problems which may arise after the purchase has been made. The purpose of this brochure is to point out some of these problems so they can be dealt with by the buyer before it is too late. There are many instances where the buyer moves into a new home, or applies for a permit to build a new home, only to have problems crop up which might have been avoided with a little foresight.

## CONDITIONS OF THE SITE

When viewing a home-site, avoid being taken in completely by the natural setting. A quiet pastoral setting might be harboring unseen catastrophe. Many Californians experienced this after building beautiful cliff side homes only to see them destroyed by mudslides. While mudslides don't represent a major problem in our county, there are difficulties with flooding, glacial sand and wind erosion.

Pottawatomie County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and is therefore required to manage all floodplains. The county has a set of floodplain maps showing all land in flood hazard areas. Be sure to check out these maps before you purchase land. There are special regulations required before anyone can build in a floodplain.

If building in a floodplain, flood insurance is required by all mortgage companies.

Another factor to consider is the condition of the soil surrounding the proposed home-site. Some soils are better suited for septic tank installation. In fact, certain types of soils are totally unsuitable for such uses as sewage and waste disposal. For this reason, percolation tests must be done by the county sanitarian, prior to the issuance of a building permit for any structure requiring sanitation facilities.

Another consideration in purchasing property is the water supply. There are three factors which must be taken into consideration with regards to water. AVAILABILITY, POTABILITY AND ABUNDANCE. Instances have occurred where a buyer purchases rural property only to discover that water is not present, not suitable for drinking or is not present in large enough amounts to be useful.

In some locations, it may be possible to hook onto a public water supply, but DON'T take this possibility for granted. Check with the appropriate water supply district serving the area. It may be that you can obtain water, but you may have to pay for lines to be brought to your location.

## REGULATIONS

### ZONING

An area which is often overlooked by the average land buyer is that of local regulations. These ordinances can affect any future plans that the buyer may have. Each city or county has their own set of regulations, so don't assume that all regulations are the same.

No one especially likes the idea of regulations, but the purpose of land use regulations is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by preventing conflicts between residential, industrial and commercial uses.

### BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits are required for all construction, whether site built or moved in. Before a building permit can be issued, an environmental health permit and a driveway entrance permit must be obtained, if required.

Also, before the building permit is issued, the structure must be staked out and a site inspection done to make sure all setbacks are correct.

In some instances, it may be necessary to rezone the property before a building permit can be issued. This can take from 30 to 60 days. Please refer to the brochure on County Zoning.

## SUBDIVISION

Subdivision regulations are for the purpose of preventing the land from being split into numerous tracts with no thought to adequate roads, utility easements, proper drainage, fire protection and adequate sanitation.

Some subdivisions have their own set of restrictive covenants, which may be more restrictive than county regulations. Restrictive covenants are between the seller and buyer and are private agreements, which are not enforced by the county.

Minimum lot sizes are required depending on the type of sanitary facilities needed: Three acre minimums with public water and private sewerage system and five acres with private well and private sewerage system.