

# Public Sanitation

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## Roles and Duties of the Public Health Officer / Technician

### Inspection and Supervision

A Public Health Officer (PHO) is empowered by various Acts, e.g. the Public Health Act Cap. 242 etc, building codes and by-laws, to access and determine the appropriateness of any siting of premises that is meant for human occupation and give relevant advice or directives.

A Public Health Officer also examines building plans and gives appropriate decisions in conformity with the relevant laws. Inspection of on-going construction meant for human occupation is necessary to ensure safety, comfort and welfare. Existing building structures are inspected to ensure their continued conformity with relevant Laws. Public Health Officers should take any decision as may be appropriate to safeguard the health, welfare and comfort of the occupants of any premises.

It is the duty of Public Health Officer and technician to ensure that all buildings are properly drained. They should advise the community on the maintenance of the drainage system. They must ascertain that all buildings plans have adequately catered for the drainage system.

They are also responsible for health education. The community should be made aware the need to provide a good, clean drainage system. They should be advised against using open channels for waste water. Where the houses are not connected to municipal sewer, care should be taken to avoid indiscriminate disposal of waste water. The effluent from septic tanks should be appropriately disposed of.

Public Health Acts stipulate drainage and latrine rules which governed the provision of a drainage system. Similarly, a building code defines what is involved in drainage works in a building. The enforcement officer (who in this case is the PHO) must ensure that nuisance arising from poor drainage is abated.

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