

LINN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

PO Box 100, 315 SW 4TH AVE, 2ND FLOOR, ALBANY, OR 97321

PHONE (541) 967-3821 FAX (541) 924-6904

<http://www.co.linn.or.us/health/eh/eh.htm>



FACT SHEET: SITE EVALUATIONS FOR SUBDIVISIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

A subdivision is defined as the creation of more than three lots from a parent parcel within a single calendar year, and this Fact Sheet is specific to evaluations for proposed subdivisions. Site evaluations are the first step toward obtaining permits for new site development that will use a septic system. The Linn County Planning and Building Department will not review or approve a subdivision within the unincorporated areas of the county until we have issued a favorable report of site evaluation for each undeveloped proposed lot. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify the best location and type of septic system for the site.

We ask that the following steps be taken in preparation for evaluation of a subdivision.

- The applicant's surveyor must provide two copies of a tentative plat showing the proposed lot lines (these are tentative rather than final, since our evaluation may make it desirable to make some changes),
- The tentative plat must contain elevations with contour lines at 5' intervals, and
- The applicant or surveyor must stake out and mark the proposed lot lines in the field, so we can tell where we are.

Following our fieldwork, we ask that your surveyors accurately locate the pits on the plat map for us. We may also find it necessary in some cases to ask for more detailed contour information.

Although the Planning Department may impose a requirement for test wells in the subdivision, **we strongly recommend that the disposal areas be identified and defined before drilling any wells.**

The site evaluation report indicates whether a permit for a septic system can be issued. **It IS NOT a permit. A separate application and fee are required for the permit to install the system.** A favorable site evaluation report is good indefinitely unless conditions on the site or on adjacent properties are changed in a way that affects the approval. In the event that an application is incomplete and additional action by or information from the applicant is required for completion, we will close the file one year after the application date and the application fee will be forfeit. A new application and fee will be required to re-activate the file.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit one application form for each lot to be evaluated. Complete the application form and include **all** of the information requested. Submit the completed **application, tentative plat with contours, and required fee** to this office.

TEST PIT PREPARATION

A minimum of **2 test pits** are required in the proposed drainfield area. Look for a logical spot on the property for a disposal system. Explore the desired area and if possible avoid placing test pits in the following areas:

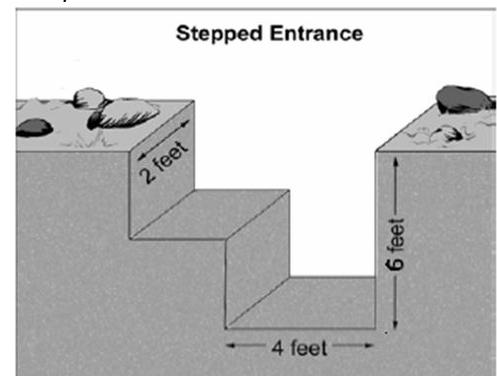
- On a steep slope (more than 45%).
- Within 50 feet upslope of sharp slope changes, escarpments, or cuts.
- In swale areas, drainageways, or where surface water is likely to collect.
- Where soil is saturated for extended periods during the winter months.

TEST PIT CONSTRUCTION

Each pit must be 2' wide, 4' long, and 6' deep.

Pits must be constructed in a manner that will allow the sanitarian to get in and out of them.

Example:



- Within 100 feet of springs and proposed or existing wells.
- Within 50 feet of intermittent streams or irrigation ditches.
- Within 50 feet (100 feet is preferable) of rivers, lakes, or streams (measure from the high bank).
- Within 10 feet of property lines or easements.
- Within 10 feet of foundations of existing or proposed buildings.
- Any area used or proposed to be used for roadway, driveway, or parking.
- Any area that has been filled or has had soil removed.

On proposed subdivision sites, **we recommend that you arrange an appointment for the sanitarian to meet with a backhoe operator on the property.** In that way, we can look for more suitable sites if the initial test pits are not successful, and the backhoe operator can backfill the pits as we complete our work.

To ensure timely completion of your site evaluation, the following requirements for test pits must be met:

- Pits should be separated by a distance of 75' to 100'. Each pit must be 2' wide, 4' long, and 6' deep. Pits must be constructed in a manner that will allow the sanitarian to get in and out of them.
- If we find that the soils are unsuitable, new test pits may be dug and will be evaluated without additional fees within ninety (90) days after the applicant is notified of the situation.
- Occasionally, the sanitarian may require additional test pits before the site evaluation report is issued. For example, if two test pits are vastly different and there are no surface features that explain the difference, more pits may be needed to make sure that the approval is located in the more suitable area.

TIMELINES AND FEES

Fees are indicated on a separate fee schedule.

Site evaluation fees for commercial developments are based on the projected sewage flow.

A portion of each application fee is paid to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to support statewide program administration and training. Please see the current Linn County Fee Schedule for the current surcharge amount.

If preparation for the evaluation has not been completed when the sanitarian arrives and the work must be rescheduled, a re-inspection fee may be charged.

SETBACKS FOR SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Minimum required setbacks include but are not limited to the following for **disposal trenches**: 10' setback from property lines, building foundations or water lines; 100' setback from any well, year-round stream, creek, pond, spring, etc. (a good rule of thumb is to get 100' away from any water).

For **septic tanks**, required setbacks include but are not limited to: 5' setback from property lines, and building foundations; 50' setback from any well, stream, river, creek, pond, irrigation ditch (a good rule of thumb is to be 50' from any water).

Please refer to the "Preserve Your Suitable Disposal Areas: Know Your Setbacks" fact sheet for a detailed list of all required setbacks.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

A favorable Land Use Compatibility Statement (LUCs) must be received before we can issue or sign off on any permit. Upon receipt, your application will be forwarded to the local Planning Authority for completion of the LUCs. If the LUCs is not approved, or otherwise not favorable, you will be notified prior to us proceeding with your application. Once notified, you may choose to withdraw your application and request a refund, or ask that we place your application on hold until any conditions are met.

For more information call our office. We currently have no reception services. Staff members are available by appointment.