

## SITE EVALUATION/APPLICATION

The purpose of the site evaluation is to locate what appears to be the most promising sites on your proposed lot to conduct pit & perc tests. Some applicants already have an idea about where they would like to place their house, well, driveway & septic systems. If you do, then we will certainly try to work with you to test first in the areas that are most conducive to your overall plans. Other applicants have no set plans and just want to locate a suitable test site so that they can work everything else onto the property around the approved test area. If you have a specific site in mind to test, then we usually try to work with you to get the system where you want it. Sometimes this is not possible due to isolation distance requirements, slope restrictions or unsuitable site conditions. If your "first choice" site doesn't look real promising we will try to explain why, and also why a different site might be more preferable. The site evaluation can be conducted days or weeks prior to the test pits actually being dug, or it can be conducted on the same day the pits are dug. Additionally, the site evaluation covers advice on the placement, number, depth & spacing of the perc holes for later perc testing. Here are some tips as to what we look for during our site evaluation:

Generally speaking, the more level the site (by "site" we will mean the proposed location of the septic system(s)) the more promising that site is for on-lot sewage disposal systems. Ideally, you would like to have a mostly level site for both the primary & replacement systems (replacement systems are discussed below) with each site covering approx. 1,000 sq. ft. When you find the level site(s) we ask you PLEASE – DO NOT DIG THE TEST PITS DIRECTLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LEVEL AREA!! (See attached sketch). The level area is where you want the system to go. The system cannot be placed over top of test pits, so the test pits should actually "bracket" the level area. (Again, refer to sketch)

If possible, also try to avoid the following when selecting the site for testing: Wet spots, spongy ground, areas of excess surface rock, steep slopes (over 8-12%), drainage areas, sinkholes or areas you believe contain very clayey or excessively rocky/slated soils. Your proposed septic system (& replacement site) must be MORE than 100' from any existing OR PROPOSED private water supplies (wells, or springs) and 50' from any surface waters like creeks, ponds etc. The proposed system must also be 10' inside of your property line.

## PIT TESTING

The purpose of the observation pits is to verify the soil type(s) present on your lot. As indicated above, pits must be dug to certain specifications or they are unsuitable. ALL newly proposed building lots must have a minimum of 3 SUITABLE test pits evaluated (the evaluation of 3 or 4 pits in one trip to the site is included in your initial deposit fee). Why 3 (or 4) pits minimum? Each newly proposed building lot must have a suitable "primary" site for the septic system. This "primary" site is actually where the system is going to be placed. The primary site MUST be bracketed by AT LEAST 2 suitable test pits (see sketch). Additionally, each newly proposed building lot must have an "alternate" or "replacement" site tested & approved. The alternate site is a suitable location on the property which can be used to install a new system should the primary system malfunction or be destroyed. A replacement site can only be approved by evaluating the soils at that site, thus pit(s) must also be dug at the proposed alternate site. Both Primary & Alternate must be perc tested, as well.

## DIGGING THE PITS:

As stated earlier, do not dig the pits in the center of the proposed site or suitable level area. The level area **MUST** remain undisturbed. **DO** dig the set(s) of test pits around the outside edge of the proposed site or level area. The test pits should have a minimum of 80-90 feet of **COMPLETELY UNDISTURBED** soil between them. **DO NOT** run the backhoe directly over the area between the pits (**ESPECIALLY** during wet conditions). Heavy equipment can compact the soil and wheels or tires can leave deep ruts in wet on damp soil which would **DESTROY THE SITE AND MAKE IT UNUSABLE!** Do not dump soil excavated from the pits onto the area between the pits or you will have insufficient space between them to proceed with perc testing! Do not dig pits on opposing sides of paths, lanes, rights of way, drainage patterns etc. **IF**, for any reason, the area between test pits is disturbed or destroyed, the entire area is unusable. If pits are not spaced far enough apart to allow proper perc testing & system placement **BETWEEN** them the area is unusable.

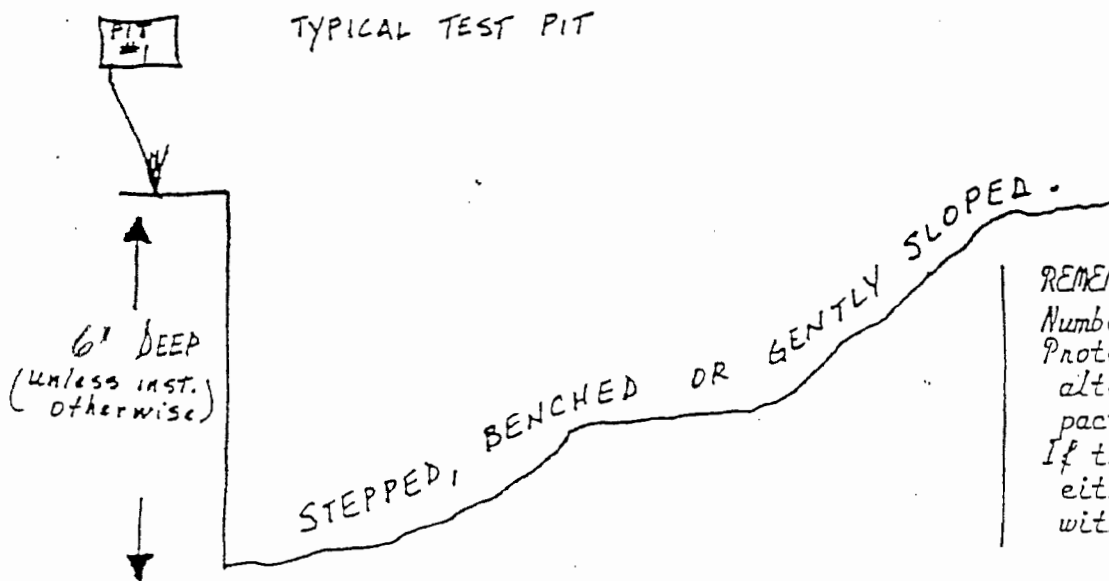
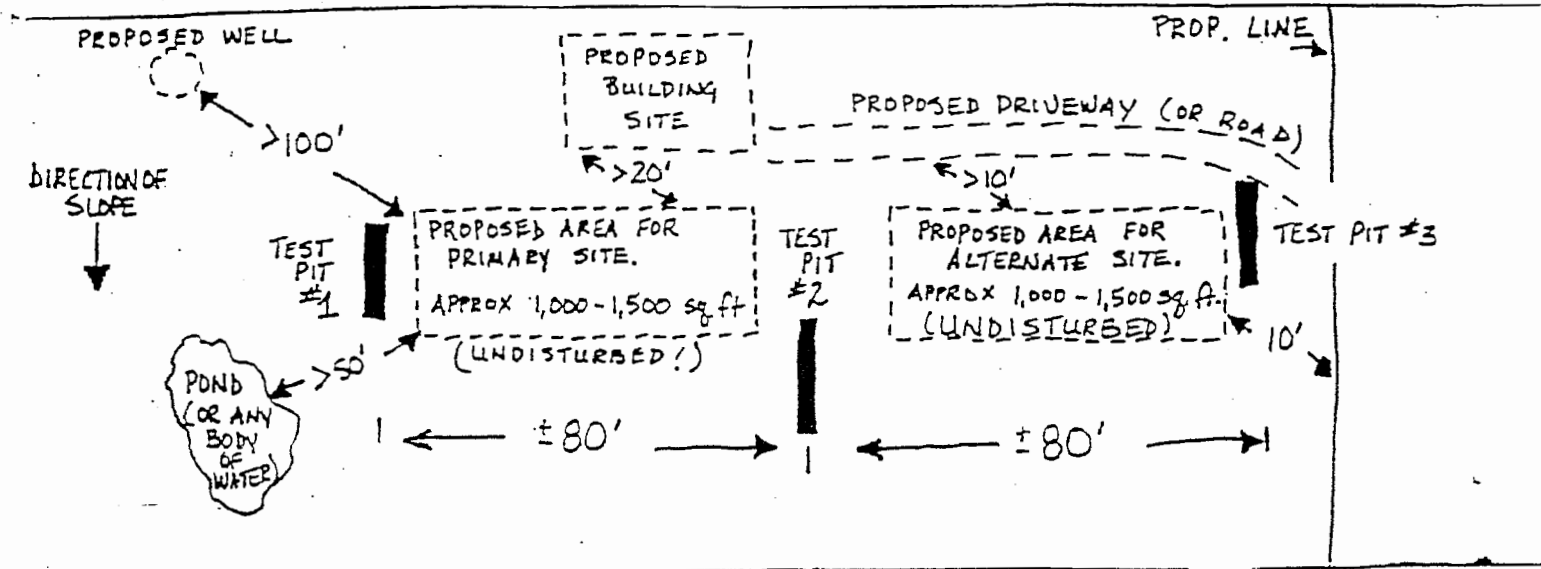
## PIT SPECIFICATIONS:

Each pit should be 6' deep unless otherwise instructed. Pits should be approx. 3' wide – or – wide enough to work in. I must evaluate the soil profile on **EACH** side of the pit, so I need room to work, turn around a little... Each pit **MUST** be stepped (as shown in sketch) or sloped for easy access & exit. If pits have 4 straight sides & I cannot **WALK** in and out of them **EASILY** they will not be evaluated, they will have to be re-dug & you will have to pay additional fees for a return trip to the site. **EACH PIT MUST BE NUMBERED !!!** Please use a flag, a stake in the ground, a ribbon around a nearby tree to **NUMBER** each pit **PRIOR TO IT BEING EVALUATED!** **T H A N K YOU !!!**

## FEES:

Your initial deposit fee includes one trip to the site to evaluate test pits. Your deposit includes **UP TO 4** pits during this one visit. The evaluation of 1,2,3, **OR 4** pits during the first trip to the site will all be billed the same amount. This fee is the same whether the pits pass or fail. Additional pits may be evaluated if you wish. The fee for each pit – pass or fail – after the 4<sup>th</sup> pit will be \$25. I must write up a soils report on **EVERY** pit that I evaluate & you will be billed for each pit – even if it is unsuitable..

Below is a sketch of an imaginary lot. It is not meant to represent your lot exactly. Obviously each lot is unique. It is, however, a good guide for site preparation & isolation distance restrictions. Iso. Dist. To "proposed items also apply to any existing items on neighboring lots. The primary site MUST be bracketed by 2 suitable pits. Soils must be adequately verified to approve the alternate site. In very marginal soils or site conditions, the alternate site may have to be perc tested to verify suitability. Refer to fee schedule for cost of alternate percs.



**REMEMBER:**  
 Number each pit.  
 Protect the proposed primary & alternate sites from ruts, compaction or any alterations.  
 If trees must be removed from either site, cut stumps flush with ground level.

If you have found suitable sites on your lot for a Primary & Replacement System, all bracketed by suitable test pits, you are now ready to proceed with the perc tests. No perc test can be conducted on a lot where suitable test pits have not been found. Generally, perc test results are used to determine square footage required for your septic system. However, if the perc test fails, that specific site is considered unsuitable regardless of the condition of the pits. You will have to move to another location to find a suitable perc test. You will be required to dig a series of ROUND holes within the area of the best test pits. Generally, these holes encompass the entire undisturbed area between two suitable pits. Number of holes can vary from 6 to 12 or more, depending on site conditions like slope, depth to LZ, etc. Depth of holes required may vary also, but listed below will be the requirements for YOUR SPECIFIC LOT (including # of holes & depth of holes). Each hole should be 6-10 inches wide. (AGAIN, these are ROUND holes). Holes dug wider than 12" are not suitable. Perc holes must be dug by hand!!! Using a back hoe is not allowed. Electric boring device IS NOT ADVISED.

After digging the proper # of holes to the proper depth you must prepare the holes as follows: (See diagram). First, rough or scarify the sides of the holes. Smooth, shiny sides are undesirable. Use a knife, screwdriver etc to rough the sides of the holes, and ALWAYS remove all loose soil from the bottoms of each hole. Next, you must add 2" of fine shale or gravel. (Gravel along roadsides that were used for non-skid purposes is perfect—and free.) Do not use gravel larger than 2-B size. Place the gravel/shale in the bottom of each hole. Again, 2" to each hole. You must now place two sturdy nails in the sides of each hole. The first nail will be 6" above the top of the gravel. The 2<sup>nd</sup> nail is 6" above that, (or 12" above the top of the gravel). Each nail must stick out from the sides of the holes as to be easily seen, but must be firmly in place so that they won't fall out of the holes when water is added.

After all perc holes are dug, shale/gravel is added & nails are in place, you should number each perc hole with a small flag, stick, ribbon etc.

Now you must make provisions to have water at the site. Again, amount of water required varies with conditions, but as a general rule 60-90 gallons is usually required. 55 gallon drums with REMOVABLE lids are best to use. (leave 2 5-gallon buckets on site also. Other acceptable containers include trash cans, many 5 gallon buckets or large FAST FLOWING tanks. UNACCEPTABLE MEANS OF PROVIDING WATER ARE: A garden hose & single 5-gallon (or smaller) buckets, 55 gallon drums with only small holes in the top which must be tipped to retrieve water from them or anything which restricts QUICK access to the water supply. Water must be placed in perc holes as close to simultaneously as possible! ANY container which was used to store: gas, kerosene, oil, paint, poisons etc. are UNACCEPTABLE!!! The residue in these containers can & will plug up the pores in the soil resulting in slower than normal or failed perc tests. You will be charged for these tests regardless so it's best to get good containers & clean water to the sites.

When all holes are dug, shale & nails are in place & water is at the site, you may call to schedule the perc test. The morning, afternoon or evening BEFORE the scheduled perc test, the site will have to be pre soaked with twelve (12) inches of water. AGAIN, WATER FOR US TO CONDUCT THE ACTUAL PERC TEST MUST BE ON SITE BEFORE YOU CALL TO SCHEDULE! SOMETIMES (especially in the summer we must start these tests at the crack of dawn – literally!). If the water is not ON SITE when we arrive, we will have to leave and you will be billed for the trip to the site & you will have to re-schedule for another perc test at a later date.

Perc tests should not be conducted if the air temperature is below 40 degrees. The only exception to this is in the case of an emergency repair to abate a health hazard or public nuisance. We can perc at temperatures between 30 & 40 degrees at your request! You will be billed for such tests, pass or fail. We will not perc at temperatures below 30 degrees.

Perc holes should be filled in after test is completed. **FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION – STAKE OFF** the approved primary & alternate sites after testing is completed!!! These areas must be protected.

DO NOT add or remove ANY soil from the sites! DO NOT drive heavy equipment over the sites (including graders, home building equipment etc...). This is **ESPECIALLY** important during wet conditions. In common terms – **LEAVE THE APPROVED SITES ALONE!** If you (or anyone) alters or disturbs or destroys the primary or alternate site **IN ANY WAY** test results are voided and that area is considered unusable until it has sat undisturbed for **FOUR YEARS!!!** If a be revoked, so **PLEASE! PROTECT THE SITES !!!**

#### CHECKLIST FOR PERC TEST:

- \* Each hole should be dug to a depth of \_\_\_\_\_
- \* Each hole should be 6-10" diameter
- \* Add 2" shale/gravel to bottoms of each hole
- \* Add 2 nails to sides of each hole, as shown
- \* 60-90 gal of water in **SUITABLE** containers left **CLOSE TO SITE** the day **BEFORE** test
- \* 8 or more sturdy stakes, ribbon or flagging material & a heavy duty hammer to stake off the approved site(s)

You will be charged \$200 for each additional perc test after the first one. You will be charged \$50 for each return trip to the site if any of the above conditions are not met & the test cannot be conducted when we arrive at the scheduled day, so please read all directions carefully. If you have any questions, call.

Pits must be closed before scheduling perc test.

