

Clackamas County Septic and Onsite Wastewater Systems Soil Site Evaluation

A soil and site evaluation determines if a septic system can be approved on a lot. The evaluation considers all options including standard, pressure distribution, ATT, and sand filter systems. The minimal system allowed by the OAR 340-071 regulations for the site and soil conditions will be prescribed. If the minimum DEQ rules cannot be met a denial notice will be sent to you providing details of the denial and possible options/solutions. If approval is granted a separate septic installation permit may be applied for by the property owner.

Site Criteria

The suitability of a site for a septic system is largely determined by the type and depth of soil and the depth to the water table. Other factors include the size of the property, the slope, location of the system relative to streams, wells, cuts and fills, and whether sewer service is legally and physically available.

Application Process

Applications are submitted through Development Direct. Visit our web page www.clackamas.us/septic for a link to Development Direct and additional information. Multiple lots will require an application for each lot.

The following must be submitted the time of application:

1. A complete site plan as per the minimum requirements (see Site Plan Requirements)
2. Notice Authorizing Representative Form (needed if the applicant is NOT the owner of the property)
A separate site evaluation application submittal & fee must be paid for each lot.

To ensure the quickest and most accurate possible analysis of your site please pay special attention to the following guidelines. Sites that do not adhere to the following risk denial or an extended review time.

Test Pits

1. **Test pits must be dug at the time of application.** If test pits are not dug at the time of inspection, a re-inspection fee may apply and your site evaluation will be rescheduled for a later date.
2. Clackamas County recommends four test pits for a new lot site evaluation (two in the proposed primary area and two in the proposed replacement area). A minimum of two test pits are required by the OAR 340-071 regulations for all site evaluations. A maximum of six test pits will be evaluated per application.
3. Test pits must be dug per Test Pit Preparation guide on back of this page. For fine textured soils (Silt, Clay) the stepped entrance is required during the wet months (usually October through June). Clackamas County recommends all test pits be dug to 6 feet deep unless a restriction prevents it.
4. The "spoils" pile MUST be kept at least two feet away from the edge of the test pit.
5. Test pits should be spaced 75' to 100' apart in the area where you intend to locate the original and replacement drainfields.
6. Test pits should be located on the driest part of the property and should not be located within any of the setbacks. (see setback list)

Site Preparation

1. If the test pits are not easy to find, mark a trail to them in the field
2. Test pits should be labeled with a stake and bright colored tape.
3. Identify the property corners on site using clearly marked stakes or similar means.
4. Provide any lock combinations or key locations for locked gates with your application

Notification

The results of the Site Evaluation will be uploaded to Development Direct. Site evaluations are scheduled based on when they are received. Unfortunately, it is not possible to schedule on-site visits but we can call prior to our visit if requested. Please call the Septic desk at 503-742-4740 or email Septicinfo@Clackamas.us for additional questions.

Test Pit Preparation for Onsite Sewage Evaluations



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Water Quality
Onsite Program
811 SW 6th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: (503) 229-5696
(800) 452-4011
Fax: (503) 229-5850
www.deq.state.or.us

When do you need a "Test Pit?"

When you apply for a permit to construct an onsite sewage disposal system, a DEQ or County inspector will have to visit the proposed construction site. A *test pit* allows the inspector to test and examine the soil and soil layers and will help determine if it is appropriate to proceed with construction. This process is often referred to as a "site evaluation."

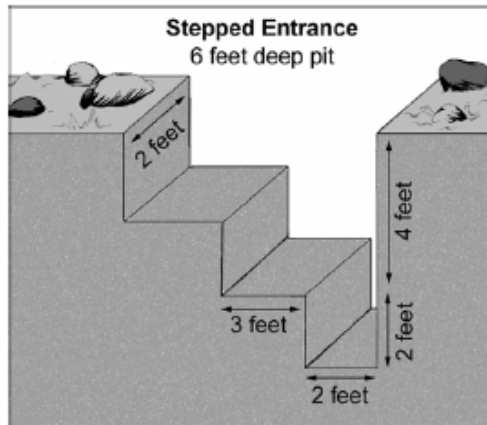
Preparing the test pit

To provide for pit stabilization and safe access, standard test pits for site evaluations must be prepared in the following manner:

- The bottom of the pit shall be at least 2 feet wide and 4 feet long.
- The depth shall be at least 4.5 feet and shall not exceed 5 feet.
- In some instances, pits need only be excavated to the layer of hard rock or to the water table if that layer is less than 5 feet.

6-Foot test pits

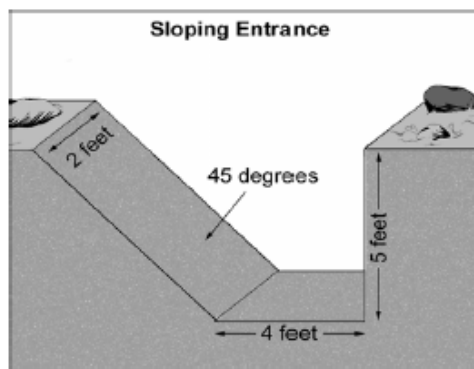
At the *request of the inspector*, test pits may need to be excavated to a depth of 6 feet as shown in the figure below:



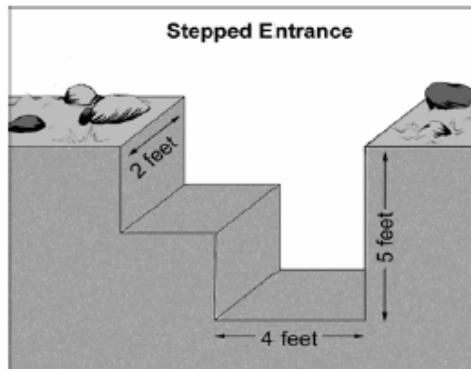
The entrance to a 6-foot test pit may be sloped or stepped as soil conditions warrant.

Providing Access to the Standard Test Pits:

For easy access, one end of the test pit shall be either:



Sloped at approximately 45 degrees or less if the soils are dry or loose.



Stepped when soils are wet.

All spoils need to be a minimum of 2 feet from the pit edge.

Learn more about Oregon's Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Program and locate a local onsite representative. Contact DEQ or visit DEQ's Onsite web page at:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/onsite/onsite.htm>

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By: Bobbi Koch