

THE SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMIT PROCESS

In order to protect the public health and prevent environmental degradation, the state and county have established minimum standards for septic systems. These standards are necessary for public health protection and to preserve the quality of ground and surface water resources for current and future users.

A permit from Contra Costa Environmental Health is required to construct, repair, or modify a septic system or destroy a septic tank in Contra Costa County. The law requires that a properly licensed and insured contractor or the property owner perform any septic system work. The following is a chronological summary of the permit process:

Application, Plot Plan and Permit Fee

To apply for a septic system permit, submit a completed application, scale plan, floor plan and permit fee to Contra Costa Environmental Health. Application forms are available at the Environmental Health office. A plot plan and floor plan must be drawn to scale on 8 1/2" x 11", 8 1/2" x 14" or 11" x 17" paper. Additional instructions for preparing the plot plan are attached. For large parcels an inset of the specific sewage disposal areas may be required also. If you have any questions about completing the application or preparing an acceptable plot plan, please contact this office for assistance. **NOTE: FOR SEPTIC SYSTEM REPAIRS A FLOOR PLAN IS NOT REQUIRED. CONTACT THIS OFFICE FOR PLOT PLAN REQUIREMENTS IF THE PERMIT IS FOR A REPAIR.**

Plot plans must show all of the following whether existing or proposed:

- a) Scale used
- b) Name, address, and phone number of property owner, contact person, and person preparing map
- c) North arrow
- d) Property lines
- e) Paved areas
- f) Unpaved areas subject to vehicular traffic
- g) Wells, abandoned wells, springs
- h) Sewage disposal areas
- i) Structures, dwellings
- j) Septic systems (including 100% expansion areas, abandoned septic tanks, works treating or storing wastewater, sewer lines, storm sewers)
- k) Location of soil profile test holes and percolation tests
- l) Location of test wells for groundwater quality determination
- m) Location of groundwater observation wells
- n) Water lines (public and private)
- o) Trees within 10 feet of sewage disposal areas
- p) Streams, ditches, canals, culverts, ponds, lakes, any body of water (intermittent or perennial)

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- q) Areas subject to flooding, inundation storm water overflow, 10-year flood plain
- r) Fuel tanks, hazardous material storage
- s) Man-made cuts, cut banks
- t) Easements
- u) Neighboring wells, abandoned wells, springs, septic systems (including 100% expansion ares), streams, ditches, canals, culverts, ponds, lakes, 10-year flood plains, any body of water (intermittent or perennial) within 100 feet of project property lines
- v) Slope of property, (on slopes show contour lines) indicate any proposed grading in sewage disposal areas.

Site Visit/Soil Evaluation

For new septic system installations and the repair or modification of disposal fields a site visit and soil evaluation will be required (unless recent soil data of sufficient detail is on file). The handout *Soil Evaluation for On-Site Wastewater Disposal* outlines this part of the permit process. **NOTE: For disposal field repairs an abbreviated soil evaluation may be possible.**

Permit Processing

After sufficient information has been provided, Environmental Health staff will review the proposal to determine if it complies with applicable laws and regulations. Based on this review a permit will be issued, denied or modifications requested. If approved, a copy of the permit and approved plans will be provided for the contractor and property owner.

Construction

Once the permit has been issued the authorized work can begin. A copy of the approved permit and plot plan must be kept somewhere on the job site. This is to insure that it is available for reference by the work crew or Environmental Health staff conducting the inspection should questions arise.

Environmental Health staff will inspect various stages of the work. The contractor is responsible for contacting the Environmental Health inspector via fax to schedule inspection appointments. The greater the advance notice the more likely a mutually convenient appointment time can be arranged.

NOTE: For disposal field installations, Environmental Health staff will inspect (1) the open trench(es) and (2) the trench(es) after rock and perforated pipe have been installed (prior to covering pipe with rock and untreated building paper).

Final Construction Approval

Upon satisfactory completion of the work permitted a final construction approval will be given.

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO THE COMPLEXITY OF SOME PROJECTS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE REQUIRED AT ANY STAGE OF THE REVIEW PROCESS.