



Skamania County

Community Development Department

Building/Fire Marshal ♦ Environmental Health ♦ Planning

Skamania County Courthouse Annex

Post Office Box 1009

Stevenson, Washington 98648

Phone: 509-427-3900 Inspection Line: 509-427-3922

SEPTIC PROCESS

Section I. Overview

1. Application:

- a. The completed application (see instructions below) must be submitted to Skamania County Community Development Department (SCCDD), PO Box 1009, Stevenson, WA 98648 or hand delivered to Skamania County Courthouse Annex at 170 NW Vancouver Avenue, Stevenson, WA 98648.
- b. The non-refundable Site Evaluation Fee must accompany the completed application.
- c. If the property is within the National Scenic Area, the NSA application process must be completed prior to beginning any work on the septic application.

2. Site Evaluation:

- a. Site Evaluation fee – A site visit will not be scheduled until a complete application is submitted and the required non-refundable fee has been paid. **All fees are subject to change by resolution of the County Commissioners.**
- b. Soil test pits – If your property is located within the National Scenic Area boundary line, soil test pits should not be dug prior to application review. We will notify you when you are allowed to dig your soil test pits.
- c. Site Evaluation results – The Environmental Health Specialist will complete a field report and summary letter, which will be sent to the property owner, following a site visit to determine what type of septic system is required.
- d. The site evaluation results are valid for **TWO YEARS**. Modifications to the site, including grading or filling, after the evaluation may cause the site approval to become void before the two-year timeframe.

3. Design Plan Review:

- a. Information contained in the field report and summary letter is used to design the septic system. A list of licensed designers is available from the SCCDD.
- b. The plan or design for the recommended septic system must be submitted to SCCDD along with the OSS Design Review and Permit application and the non-refundable fee.
- c. The Environmental Health Specialist has 14 days to review the septic system design plan.

4. Permit/Plan Approval:

- a. A septic permit will be issued following review and approval of the septic design. The permit is valid for **TWO YEARS**.
- b. The signed permit and original approved designs will be sent to both the property owner and designer, indicating approval to proceed with installation of the septic system.

5. System Installation:

- a. A list of approved, licensed septic installers is available at SCCDD for use in selecting a septic system installer.
- b. A property owner may obtain approval to install his or her own system standard gravity distribution septic system. To do so, he or she must first pass the Self-Installer Test. Owners are not allowed to install alternative systems. For more information, call (509) 427-3900.

6. Submittals: Upon completion of the septic system installation, the following must be submitted to Skamania County Community Development.

- a. Blue Tag – for “alternative septic systems,” (septic systems that are not standard gravity systems) the Designer must complete and submit a Blue Tag indicating approval for any pressure distribution system or any higher treatment level system.
- b. As-Built – the Installer (standard gravity system) or Designer (alternative system) must complete and submit an As-Built Sketch (Record drawing) of the septic system on the property for any type of system installed using forms provided by SCCDD.

7. Final Septic System Approval:

- a. Following receipt of the Blue Tag (if applicable) and As-Built Sketch, SCCDD will schedule a final septic installation inspection by the Environmental Health Specialist.
- b. SCCDD will provide a letter of approval, along with copies of the final As-Built Sketch to the property owner, installer and the Skamania County Building Division.

Section II. SEPTIC APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Contact person: Property owner and applicant, if different

2. Contact information: Complete mailing address and telephone number(s) are required.

3. Assessor’s Tax Lot Number (14 digits): The Tax Lot # is required. This can be obtained by calling the Skamania County Assessor’s Office at (509) 427-3720; or by using the Assessor’s web site at <http://skamaniawa.taxesifter.com/taxesifter/disclaimer.asp>.

4. Site Address: Most new sites do not have an existing address. Instead, enter:

- a. The road on which the property is located
- b. The estimated mile post
- c. Nearest cross road

5. Site Plan:

- a. Attach complete Site Plan.

6. Water Source: Indicate the water source that will serve the development. If is not a public water system, a Water Adequacy Verification (WAV) may be required before a building permit can be issued. Contact SCCDD for the WAV Application packet and exemption criteria.

7. Short Plats: For short plats and subdivisions, a Land Division – Septic application is required.

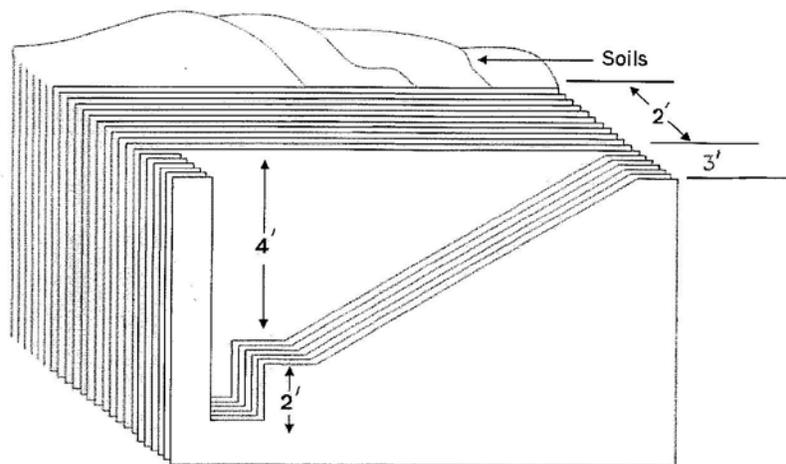
SECTION III: SITE EVALUATION PREPARATION

Site Evaluation Preparation

1. Soil test pits:

- a. Two (2) test pits must be provided in the primary drainfield area, and two (2) additional holes must be provided in the proposed reserve area. Additional holes are encouraged in other areas of the site for potential consideration as drainfield locations. Doing so creates more options for locating a septic system on the property and may also result in the discovery of soils that would accommodate a less costly system. A maximum of eight (8) soil test pits will be evaluated per application and fee.
- b. Test pits should be no less than fifty (50) feet apart, and not more than one hundred (100) feet apart.
- c. Test holes must be a minimum of 5 feet deep (if possible), twenty-four (24) inches wide and have an access slope on one side with a slope of no more than forty (40) degrees.
- d. Test holes deeper than four (4) feet must have a bench constructed at four (4) feet below the ground surface.
- e. Benches in test holes must be a minimum of twenty (20) inches wide with zero or nominal slope.
- f. Test holes may not exceed a depth of six (6) feet unless permission is granted by the Department prior to excavation.
- g. In unstable soils, holes deeper than four (4) feet must be shored and constructed in a manner that reasonably assures the safety of individuals entering therein.

TEST PIT EXAMPLE



- h. On lots where difficult or complex conditions exist, a licensed designer or installer may need to be consulted.
- i. Mark the test pits with blue flagging tape.
- j. Put a sign with the name of the Applicant where the property meets the County road. Put flagging on the sign to make it easily visible.
- k. If easement road, place sign where the easement road meets the County road, then place another sign where property meets the easement road.
- l. On multiple lots, identify lot numbers.
- m. Winter water tests will be required for all sites within eighteen (18) inches or less of soil above a restrictive layer due to high water table, unless waived by the Department.

2. Drainfield

- a. Sufficient area is needed for the drainfield, and an equal amount for a drainfield replacement (reserve area) must be available for future use.
- b. Overall slope in the proposed drainfield area must not exceed 45 percent (24 degrees)
- c. Drainfield sites must be a minimum of 25 feet from slopes greater than 100 percent (45 degrees or 1:1)

3. Setbacks

- a. A 100-foot setback from all wells or bodies of water (streams, ponds, seasonal water, etc.) is required.
- b. In some cases, a setback greater than 100 feet from wells and surface water may be required