



**CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH**  
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## **HOW TO OBTAIN AN ONSITE SEWAGE SYSTEM (OSS) PERMIT**

These are the steps to the OSS permitting process:

### **STEP I. SOIL AND SITE EVALUATION:**

- Property has a current (5 year) soil and site evaluation:
  - YES – If yes, go to Step II
  - NO – If no:
    - Complete OSS evaluation application.
    - Consultation with a Washington State licensed septic designer for assistance with test hole placement, soil/site evaluation and plot plan preparation is advised.**
    - Attach a plot plan with at least four test holes noted. These test holes must meet Clark County Public Health (CCPH) criteria (reverse side). CCPH will evaluate the soils.
    - Plot plan should show approximate location of the proposed building, any surface water, ditches, water wells (used and unused), utilities, forested areas and slopes.
    - Pay CCPH fee (see *fee schedule*) and place CCPH provided flagging at site.

A CCPH environmental health specialist will complete a soil & site evaluation. A soil and site evaluation letter will be mailed to the property owner within 14 working days of submittal date. To expedite the process, ask a Washington State licensed OSS designer about the concurrency process.

### **STEP II. DESIGN & PERMIT PROCESS:**

- Contract with a Washington State licensed designer to design a site appropriate OSS design, based on the soil and site evaluation. The designer will obtain the soil and site evaluation from CCPH or may have completed evaluation themselves in step I.
- Four (4) design copies and the design review/permit fee are submitted to CCPH. Conventional designs are reviewed within approximately seven (7) working days of submittal date; alternative designs are reviewed within approximately twelve (12) working days of submittal date. This review time may be extended if a design revision is required.
- Upon design approval, permit will be typed and released. The permit must be on site during OSS installation for CCPH final/auditing. The property owner should retain a copy of the permit.

### **STEP III. INSTALLATION:**

- Contract with a CCPH certified installer.
- The installer will notify CCPH when site is ready. CCPH may conduct a final site audit or final inspection. All alternative systems must receive a final inspection by the contracted designer.

# SOIL EVALUATION APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

## Test Hole Construction

1. All sites *must* be clearly marked with a ribbon to identify the entry to the site, the test holes, and the route to the test holes. Ribbon may be obtained at Clark County Environmental Public Health Customer Service counter.
2. **Two test holes must be provided in the primary drainfield area, and two additional holes must be provided in the reserve area.** Additional holes may be dug in other areas of the site that could potentially be considered for drainfield locations. This may create more options for locating the system and structures on the property, and may create more options for locating the system and structures on the property, and may also discover soils that would accommodate a less costly system. Field staff will log up to 8 profile holes during the site inspection.
3. Test holes must not be less than 50 feet apart, nor more than 75 feet apart.
4. **Test Hole Dimensions**  
Test holes must be dug approximately 5-6 feet deep and 3 feet wide. In order to comply with safety requirements of the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, test holes must be constructed as follows:
  - Each hole must have a ramped entry of approximately 45° to allow safe access.
  - For holes deeper than 4 feet, scoop out a portion from the floor to gain the additional depth needed to observe up to 6 feet of soil profile (see sketch).
  - Place the excavated soil no closer than two feet from the excavation.
  - Washington State Administrative Code (WAC 246-272A) requires that each hole be dug at least 3 feet wide and to a depth 3 feet deeper than the anticipated bottom of the disposal component. Adequate hole depth is necessary to identify restrictive layers in the soil profile and to assure that the drainfield can be installed with acceptable vertical separation. For example, for conventional systems, 36 inches of soil must exist between the restrictive layer and the trench bottom.
  - Shallower profile holes may be allowed if a clear restrictive layer or standing water is encountered at a shallower depth.
  - However, if shallower profile holes are prepared, and no restrictive layers are encountered, **the restrictive layer will be called at the depth of the profile hole.**
5. If holes are not properly constructed and/or if site is not adequately flagged; the site may be denied. *An additional fee may be required before the site is re-visited.*