



# SUTTER COUNTY

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Building Inspection  
Code Enforcement

Engineering/Water Resources  
Environmental Health

Planning  
Road Maintenance

### **Soil Testing and How to Apply for an On-Site Sewage Disposal Permit**

It is important for Environmental Health to properly evaluate and verify a project complies with Sutter County's On-Site Sewage Treatment and Disposal Ordinance. For new development projects, all Development Services Divisions need to be consulted for additional applicable laws and regulations. The following is a chronological summary of the application process:

1. Submit soil testing application, fee, and site plan
2. Perform soil test and site review
3. Submit on-site sewage disposal design
4. Design review by Environmental Health
5. Submit on-site sewage disposal permit application and fee
6. Issuance of permit
7. System installation and site inspections
8. Final approval

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1. Application and Site Plan

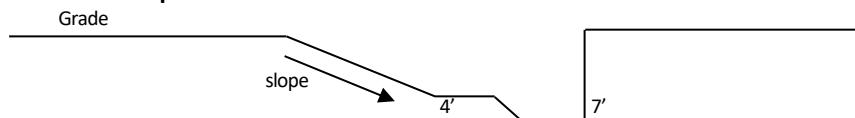
- A. Submit completed soil testing application and fee.
- B. Submit an accurate, engineered-scaled site plan, showing the exact locations of the following items, whether existing or proposed:
  1. Scale used and north arrow
  2. Name and contact information of person preparing plot plan
  3. Property lines
  4. Paved areas (including driveways, sidewalks, patios, pool decks, etc.)
  5. Unpaved areas subject to vehicular traffic
  6. Structures (including pools, carports, decks, shops, covered patios, gazebos, etc.)
  7. On-site wastewater disposal system, if applicable (septic tank, sewer lines, cleanouts, leachlines, distribution system, etc.)
  8. Wells: proposed, existing, properly destroyed, and abandoned
  9. Off-site wells and abandoned wells located within 100 feet from property lines
  10. Water lines
  11. Trees within 10 feet of on-site wastewater disposal system or 100% disposal field replacement area
  12. Streams, canals, culverts, ditches, lakes, ponds, areas subject to flooding, stormwater runoff or inundation, and any body of water (intermittent or perennial) on property and within 50 feet of property lines
  13. Easements

2. Soil Testing, Site Review and Other Information

A. To determine on-site sewage disposal requirements Environmental Health requires soil testing. This involves excavating at least two soil test holes for new development (minimum 75 feet apart). One test hole needs to be excavated in the initial proposed wastewater disposal area and one hole in the area to reserve for future replacement wastewater disposal. For replacement of failed systems, excavation of only one test hole in the area proposed for wastewater disposal is needed. *If your property is part of a recently approved subdivision, soil testing may have already been done.*

**The applicant/owner is responsible to secure an excavating operator and equipment**, and it is recommended the excavating operator and equipment be on-site during the evaluation. A list of excavating operators can be provided. **Soil test holes are to be dug the day of the soil test**, either just prior to the inspector's arrival or while the inspector is on-site, with a gentle slope from grade, allowing the inspector easy ingress and egress, to a landing at 4 foot and continue to 7 feet.

**Soil profile test hole specifications:**



Soil testing can usually be scheduled within 2 working days of notification. If there may be known or anticipated site constraints related to installation of an on-site sewage disposal Environmental Health will generally recommend an authorized professional be present at the soil testing. An authorized professional may be any of the following: a California State Registered Environmental Health Specialist, a California State Registered Civil Engineer, a California State Registered Geotechnical Engineer, a California State Certified Engineering Geologist, or a Certified Professional Soil Scientist. A list of authorized professionals can be provided. Based on the soil evaluation, Environmental Health may require additional testing when restrictive soils are encountered. Additional tests may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

1. Additional and/or deeper soil test holes
2. Percolation tests
3. Particle size analysis (hydrometer testing)
4. Seasonal groundwater monitoring

B. A site review is usually performed by Environmental Health at the same time as soil testing to verify the accuracy of the site plan.

C. Based on project type (residential or non-residential, i.e. commercial, industrial) and the estimated sewage flows, Environmental Health may require additional information and/or review by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

D. Projects will be denied at this point if site conditions fail to meet applicable standards.

3. On-Site Wastewater Disposal Design

Based on soil testing results and site review Environmental Health will determine if the on-site sewage disposal system may be conventional gravity-fed or be non-conventional and designed by an authorized professional. Any on-site sewage disposal system for non-residential (commercial, industrial) use will require a design by an authorized professional.

When the size and type of an on-site sewage disposal system is determined, submit a site plan or design that complies with Section 1B and shows the following:

- A. Layout of on-site sewage disposal system and 100% disposal field replacement area
- B. Exact location of soil test holes, and if applicable, percolation tests, groundwater monitoring.

4. Environmental Health will review all information submitted for compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The submittal may be approved, modifications requested, or denied.

5. Once the review is complete submit an on-site sewage disposal permit application and fee and the permit will be issued. The installation permit is valid for 2 years from the date of issuance.

6. Environmental Health will conduct inspections during installation and/or upon completion to ensure the on-site sewage disposal system conforms with the design and applicable laws and regulations. Once the system is complete and an as-built site plan is submitted, and engineer's certification for non-conventional systems, final approval will be given.