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INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOIL PERCOLATION TEST & SUBSOIL INVESTIGATION HOLES

I. Purpose:

The most important steps in determining the suitability of land for subsurface sewage disposal is the appraisal of soil and site conditions on the property.

First, an excavation must be made to determine subsurface conditions, and to determine the distance to groundwater and bedrock. Second, soil percolation tests must be made to determine the ability of the soil to absorb sewage. This will be the basis of design for the sewage disposal system.

In selecting the area for the proposed sewage disposal system, you must consider the following guidelines for separation of water supply and sewage system. In general, the following minimum distances are required: 50 feet to septic tank and tight sewer lines, 100 feet to subsurface disposal fields, and 150 feet to seepage pits.

Water service lines under pressure should not pass closer than 10 feet to any part of the disposal system.

II. Percolation Test ó General Information:

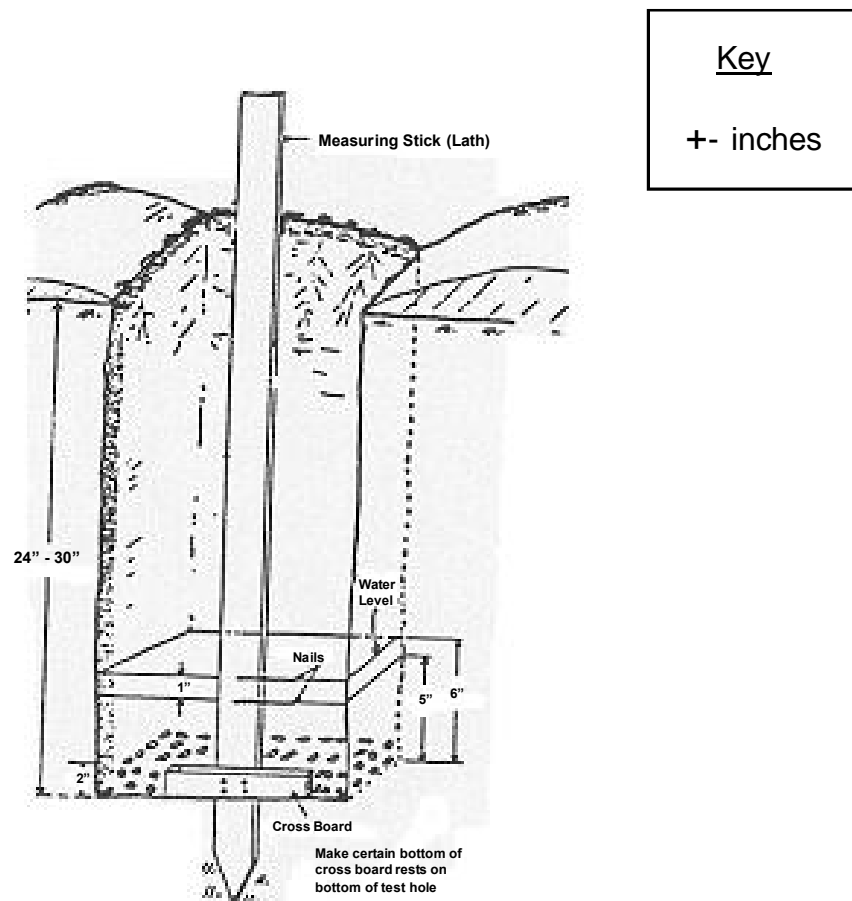
At least two (2) soil percolation test holes should be dug in the area where the sewage disposal system is to be constructed. The depth of the holes should be 2-5 feet in depth. Test holes should be kept as shallow as possible but must be dug to the depth of the permeable strata, if one exists. In addition, one (1) soil observation pit should be dug a minimum of 6 ft. deep or at least two (2) feet below the bottom of the deepest test hole to insure that uniform soil and site conditions prevail.

If a seepage pit is under consideration, soil percolation tests must be run at the proposed mid-depth and full depth of the proposed pit bottom. In addition, a soil observation pit must be dug a minimum of three (3) feet below the proposed pit bottom to verify uniform soil conditions and to check for the presence of groundwater.

In the event that unsuitable soil conditions are found in the first test hole, it is not necessary to dig a second test hole unless there is reason to believe that there is suitable soil in another location on the property where the system could be installed.

III. Soil Test Procedure:

- A. Test hole(s) to be constructed in area of the proposed sewage disposal system.
- B. Dig hole(s) about 12 inches wide (bottom diameter) and 24-30 inches deep. In order to facilitate the running of the test, a larger excavation should be made for the upper portion of the hole.
- C. Carefully scratch sides and bottom of test holes with a pointed instrument to remove any smeared surface and then remove all loose material from test holes.
- D. Place 2 inches of gravel or crushed stone on bottom of test hole to reduce scouring and silting action.
- E. Contact your local Health Department office and schedule an appointment to have the soil tests conducted.
- F. Twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled tests, fill the test hole(s) with water to presoak them.
- G. Applicant must provide a minimum of 5 gallons of water for each test hole on the day of the test.



SOIL PERCOLATION TEST