



Naugatuck Valley Health District

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Ansonia Beacon Falls Derby Naugatuck Seymour Shelton

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR SOIL TESTING

If your home is on a septic system and public sewers are not available to you, the Public Health Code of the State of Connecticut requires certain information to be on file before an application for a building addition, accessory structure or similar activity can be reviewed. This includes the size, type and location of the septic system as well as data on the type of soil on the property. If this information is not available for your property, soil testing must be done and the septic system located before we can review your application. A licensed septic installer should be contacted at this time to assist you in this process.

The information below is intended for guidance only if you have been told that there are no records of the septic system serving your home and that soil testing must be done on your property.

SEPTIC SYSTEM INFORMATION

We must know the size and location of the septic tank, and have, at least, a general idea of where the leaching system is located on the lot. If there are no maps, you must uncover at least three (3) corners of the septic tank and the manhole cover. This will allow the size of the tank to be measured and to plot its location relative to the house. If your activity is too close to the septic system, you will have to change the location of the proposed activity or potentially relocate the system to meet the required setbacks. We strongly recommend a licensed septic installer assist you with this process.

SOIL TESTING

Soil testing consists of a deep test pit(s) at least 6-8 ft. deep and percolation tests. The tests should be done in an area where a repair of the system would likely be done, but care must be taken to avoid digging too close to the existing system so as not to damage it. You must arrange for a contractor with a backhoe to dig the deep test pit before an appointment can be made with the sanitarian. It is best to hire a licensed septic installer to do this, but anyone with a backhoe may dig the hole. The hole should not be dug too far in advance of your appointment to minimize the hazards associated with open holes in the yard. The hole may be dug with a ramp at one end so the sanitarian may enter the hole to examine the walls of the pit. Once the information has been recorded, the hole should be backfilled as soon as possible.

The percolation hole is dug with a posthole digger in the same area as the deep test hole and should be about 24 inches deep, 6 to 12 inch diameter. The percolation hole must be filled with water before the test to presoak. The perc hole must be presoaked a minimum of 2 hours before the percolation test has begun but no more than 30 hours prior. Water must be available at the hole for the sanitarian and may be provided by a hose or with a bucket. You need not be at the site during the percolation test as long as the hole has been properly prepared and the water is available.

Once all of the septic system information and soil data has been collected, your application will be reviewed and approved if it complies with the provisions of the Public Health Code. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the Health District at 203-881-3255.