

# Procedure for Applying to Construct a New Residential Wastewater System

## Step 1 – Making contacts and gathering information

**If you have not yet purchased the property**, contact Hamilton County Public Health (515-832-9565) to get information about options and regulations for constructing a wastewater system on the property. By receiving information about the soils and possible limitations of the property for construction of a wastewater system prior to purchase, better plans and decisions about the development of the property can be made. There is no charge for this service.

**If you have purchased the property** and are getting ready to build, contact the Hamilton County Planning & Zoning Department to get information about obtaining a building permit to construct your new home. In addition, contact Hamilton County Public Health (515-832-9565) to get information about options and regulations for construction of a wastewater system on your property.

When calling the public health department for wastewater system information the environmental health specialist will likely ask these questions:

- ✓ What is the location of the property?
- ✓ What is the approximate size or acreage of the property?
- ✓ Is the property zoned as residential?

## Step 2 – Contacting a Licensed Septic Contractor or Soil Specialist

To begin the wastewater system permitting process, **contact a licensed septic contractor or soil specialist to perform a site characterization and a soil evaluation**. Call Hamilton County Public Health (515)832-9565 to find out how to contact a professional who can perform these functions. The contract between you and the licensed septic contractor or soil specialist is private, so you should be aware that fees and evaluation procedures differ from company to company.

## Step 3 – Site characterization

The **site characterization** is used to locate the best place for the onsite wastewater system. Work with the contractor to make sure the site characterization accurately assesses:

- ✓ The location of the house, future or existing outbuildings, driveways, and other construction that will impact the size and location of the wastewater system. Other construction includes swimming pools, decks, patios, and major landscaping such as terracing or gardens.
- ✓ The locations of all easements and lot lines so that setbacks and separation distances can be achieved
- ✓ The locations of known drainage tiles
- ✓ The locations of areas that are subject to flooding
- ✓ The elevation of the lowest point of the house (usually the basement elevation)

## Step 4 – Soil Evaluation

Once the site characterization is complete, the **soil evaluation** can be done. The evaluator will use a large diameter probe to draw samples of the soil from the various locations on the property that have been identified as potential locations for the onsite wastewater system. The soil evaluator will make descriptions of the color, texture, and structure of the soil. Limiting layers, such as high groundwater indicators, bedrock, or tight clay soil, will also be noted. The information obtained through this process will be used to find the best type of system for treating the wastewater on your property. It will also be used to determine the size of the system to be installed.

## **\_\_\_ Step 5 - Submitting your permit application**

The following must be submitted to Hamilton County Public Health to obtain a construction permit for a new onsite wastewater system.

\_\_\_ Completed application to construct a new wastewater system, **signed by the applicant or applicant's agent.**

\_\_\_ The permit fee (the amount of the permit fee can be found on the permit application).

\_\_\_ Drawing of the property that includes the location of the house and any other proposed or existing buildings, lot lines, easements, water well(s), all soil probes, and delineation of all areas that are not suitable locations for the wastewater system.

\_\_\_ Soil description for every soil probe performed on the property, or perc tests completed.

\_\_\_ Complete wastewater system design and specifications

All of these materials should be submitted to the health department at the same time. It is important to note that most of the permit application is commonly completed by the certified installer, or registered engineer. If you have questions about what you need to include in your permit application please contact Hamilton County Public Health (515-832-9565).

## **\_\_\_ Step 6 – Site inspection/ issuing the permit**

When our office receives an application we review all of the information and verify its accuracy, and may perform a site inspection of the property. All stakes and flags marking the location of the house, the basement elevation, and the locations of the soil probe/perc test should be in place to perform an accurate assessment. If the information is determined to be complete and accurate, a permit to construct the wastewater system will be issued. The permit to construct the wastewater system is valid for one year from the date of issue. Upon final inspection by authorized agent septic system will be approved if work is completed to code.

## **\_\_\_ Step 7 – Protecting the Septic Site**

Hamilton County Public Health recommends the applicant assure that the area designated for the wastewater system is physically protected to prevent being disturbed in any way no driving on or walking around site, which can compact site and alter site. Disturbance to the area could alter absorption, which can result in a costly reevaluation of the property and even a change in the wastewater system technology that is used.

## **\_\_\_ Step 8 – Finding a contractor/ final inspection**

Many wastewater system contractors are listed in the phone book's yellow pages, or talk to county sanitarian for list. Your building contractor may also be able to provide some names to you.

County Personal must inspect the wastewater system before it can be covered up. We must be notified by you or the wastewater system contractor when it is ready for inspection. We will send you a copy of our final inspection diagram and information about the proper maintenance of your system.

\_\_\_ Hamilton County Public Health must be notified for a final inspection at least 24 hours before completion of the wastewater system.

Hamilton County Public Health

1610 Collins Street, Suite 1 Webster City, IA. 50595

(515)832-9565 Hours: M-F 8am-4pm

[www.hamiltoncountypublichealth.com](http://www.hamiltoncountypublichealth.com)