



Bureau of Environmental Health

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Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer

PERCOLATION TEST AND PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPED LOTS

Prior to issuance or approval of a building permit, submission of a Percolation Certification Plan is required by the Howard County Health Dept. per Howard County Code Sec. 3.805. This rule may not apply **IF** the proposed structure is less than 250 sq. ft. and is not a garage or a similar structure, does not increase the amount of living space, **AND** the existing onsite septic system is adequate for the existing property use.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Complete an Application for Percolation Testing (available online or at our office) and submit payment to the Bureau of Environmental Health during office hours in the amount of \$506 (per lot) made payable to the Director of Finance.
- A Well & Septic staff member will contact the individual listed as the applicant within 10 business days to schedule a date for the percolation test or to discuss comments/concerns regarding the site plan.
- It is the responsibility of the homeowner to coordinate a backhoe onsite the day of the percolation test to perform the excavations (a list of contractors who do perc testing may be made available upon request). Test locations must be adequately staked prior to testing.
- Miss Utility must also be contacted prior to the percolation test date.

SITE PLAN

Submit a site plan (prepared by a professional surveyor or engineer; surveyors plats may also be used at the homeowner's discretion). The site plan should be submitted along with an application for percolation testing. The site plan **MUST** be drawn to an appropriate scale (1:30 – 1:100) and must show the following:

- Identification of the property, road, street address if applicable, subdivision name, etc.
- Name address and telephone number of the owner, developer, and the person preparing the plan.
- If the lot was created AFTER March 1972 a minimum area of 10,000 sq. ft. is required as designated septic reserve area. For lots created PRIOR to March 1972 a septic reserve area large enough to accommodate 3 systems (an initial and 2 replacements) must be proposed. An adequate number of test locations (may be determined by the approving authority) must be proposed within the septic area.
- Any adjustments/modifications to the existing septic easement showing area lost and area gained.
- Topography at two-foot intervals and statement verifying such.
- The existing well and/or any proposed wells on the property and the existing septic system (i.e. septic tank, drywell, trenches).
- All existing and any proposed property lines.

- Landscape features such as swales, ponds, streams, etc., slopes greater than 25%, soil type boundaries, etc. (wet season soil will be limited to testing during a designated time of year).
- All existing structures on the property (if necessary label structures to remain or to be removed).
- Location(s) of proposed structure/addition.
- All wells and septic systems within 100' of the property boundaries and all existing or proposed wells less than 200' down-gradient of a septic system and/or septic easement.

PERCOLATION CERTIFICATION PLAN

The Percolation Certification Plan will formally establish an approved septic easement on the property in accordance with Howard County Code. Following completion of percolation testing this plan should be submitted to our office for review. The Perc Cert plan will have the same requirements as shown on the site plan in addition to the following:

- Legend symbols to distinguish plan features (i.e. well, septic etc.) and all test holes that passed, failed, or were held for re-review (e.g., for wet season), and any previously documented holes.
- A professional seal or signed statement:
 “I certify that the information shown herein is based on field work performed by me or under my direct supervision, and is correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.”
- Health Officer Signature block:

Approved For Private Water and Private Sewerage Systems	

Health Officer, Howard County Health. Dept.	Date

The following notes must also be included on the plan:

- Any changes to a private sewage easement shall require a revised percolation certification plan.
- The topography of this plat is taken from _____ and is verified to accurately represent the relative changes on the subject property.
- All wells and septic systems located within 100' of the property boundaries and 200' down gradient of any wells and/or septic systems have been shown.
- A purpose statement indicating the purpose of the plan.
- Certification of compliance with MDE ownership width and lot area requirements for lots created after 1985:
 - The lot(s) shown herein complies/comply with the minimum ownership width and lot area as required by the Maryland Department of Environment
- MDE statement for lots created after March 1972:
 - “This area designates a private sewage disposal area of at least 10,000 sq. ft. as required by the Maryland Department of Environment for individual sewage disposal. Improvements of any nature in this area are restricted. This sewage disposal area shall become null and void upon connection to a public sewerage system. The County Health Officer shall have authority to grant adjustments to the private sewage easement Recordation of a revised sewage easement shall not be necessary.”

OR

- MDE statement for lots created before March 1972:
 - “This area designates a private sewage area as required by the Maryland Department of the Environment for individual sewage disposal. For lots created prior to March of 1972 it provides at least enough area to accommodate an initial and two replacement septic

systems as required by the Howard County Health Department. Improvements of any nature in this area are restricted until public sewerage is available. This area shall become null and void upon connection to a public sewerage system. The county Health Officer shall have the authority to grant adjustments to the private sewage area. Recordation of a modified sewage area shall not be necessary.”

The Percolation Certification Plan will be reviewed for its completeness and compliance with state and local code. Once the plan receives the Health Officer’s signature indicating approval, a building permit may be issued thereafter if there is no septic upgrade or well upgrade involved. Any septic system replacements, upgrades or well replacement or upgrades shall be completed prior to building permit approval.

Howard County Code & setback requirements are available for reference on our website at the following address:

<http://www.howardcountymd.gov/Health/docs/WellandSepticRegulations.pdf>

9/20/13 JW