



# Guidelines for Test Hole Construction and Placement for On-Site Sewage Systems

**Test Hole Siting:** Test holes must be dug around the perimeter of the proposed original and replacement drainfield. Locate test holes away from:

- Rock outcrops
- Vehicular traffic areas
- Livestock areas
- Damp or poorly drained areas
- Excessive slopes
- Areas of fill material (non-native soils)
- Irrigated areas such as gardens or orchards
- At least 100' from wells and surface water

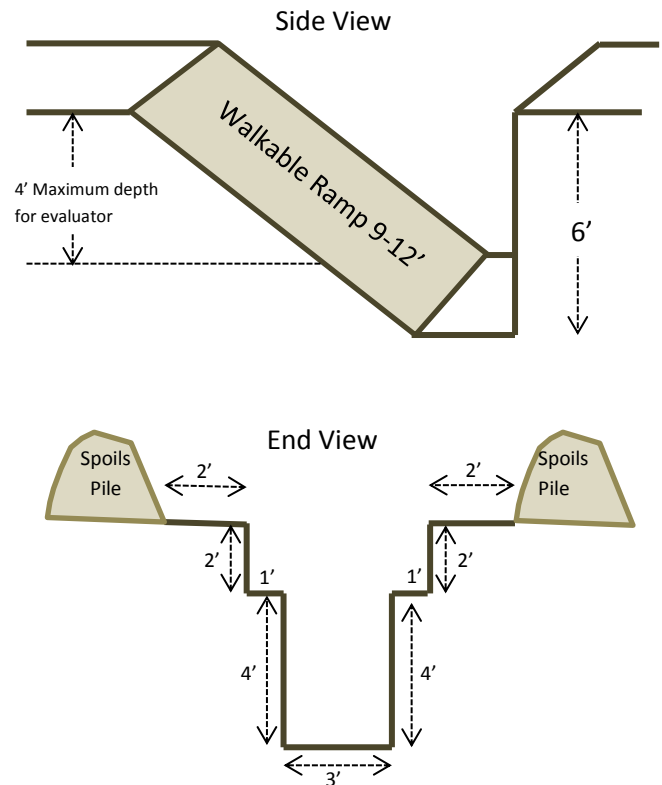
On sloping sites, holes must be dug at the same elevation and additional up-slope or downslope test holes are recommended.

**Required Number:** The number of test holes dug depends upon the project and site conditions. For single family residential development, a minimum of 2 test holes are required in the original and replacement drainfield area. A maximum of 6 test holes will be reviewed during the first site evaluation. For multi-family, non-residential, or commercial projects, two test holes per unit volume of sewage (450 gallons per day) is required. Additional site reviews can be conducted for a \$175 fee.

**What to Look For:** Desirable soils are those that provide both drainage and treatment of wastewater effluent. Take effort to avoid soils and areas that are:

- Too porous to provide treatment (extremely gravelly and coarse sandy soil)
- Too impervious to allow proper draining, such as heavy clay soils
- Subject to high groundwater conditions
- Shallow depths to bedrock

Even though soil conditions may not be desirable, in most cases on-site sewage systems can be installed. However, these systems may require enhanced treatment and are more expensive.



## Construction Requirements:

- Call 811 to locate underground utilities prior to digging.
- Test holes must be constructed as shown.
- Every test hole must have a ramp that provides for entry and exit without the need of aid.
- Health District staff cannot enter improperly constructed or unsafe test holes. If additional site visits are necessary, a \$175 fee will apply.
- For safety, all equipment within 20' of the test pit must be shut down when a person is in the test hole.
- Test holes shall not be left open for extended periods unless properly barricaded per L & I regulation (such as orange construction fencing around excavation supported by metal fence posts. This is a property owner responsibility.
- When test holes are ready for evaluation, contact Northeast Tri County Health District.