



**Chester County Health Department  
Bureau of Environmental Health Protection  
Division of Water and Sewage  
610-344-6526 or 610-344-6688**

## **Application & Permit Procedure for On-Lot Sewage Disposal Systems**

The Chester County Health Department is responsible for preventing or minimizing public health hazards caused by malfunctioning on-lot sewage disposal systems. Chester County regulations are consistent with the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act 537. Because rapid new construction growth and a lack of available public sewerage facilities in most areas, the demand for properly designed and installed on-lot sewage disposal systems is critical.

Permits for the installation of On-Lot Sewage Disposal Systems are required. Obtaining a permit is dependent upon the satisfactory completion of this application process, including specific forms, in compliance with the Rules and Regulations of the Chester County Health Department in effect at the time the application is filed. This process also requires at least one acceptable percolation test and at least two acceptable test pits for soil profile examination.

Such a permit constitutes authorization to proceed with the planning and installation of the on-lot sewage disposal system specified in the application. The permit, therefore, is only a permit to proceed. It indicates only that the issuing authority is satisfied at the time of issuance that the installation of the system shall be in accordance with the Rules, Regulations and Standards of the Chester County Health Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Administration of Sewage Facilities Permitting Program, and Chapter 73-Standards for Sewage Disposal Facilities. Issuance of a permit shall not preclude the enforcement of other health laws, ordinances, or regulations in case of malfunctioning of the system.

The permit is neither a contract, nor a guarantee of either final approval or of satisfactory functioning of an on-lot system. Permits issued according to this process should be capable of serving a structure for many years if properly sited, constructed, and maintained by the property owner.

While an issued permit is valid for three years from the date of issuance as specified by State Regulation, it should be recognized that interim changes in State and/or County Regulations, physical conditions in the soil caused by construction activities or prevailing weather conditions, seasonal high water tables, perched water tables, and/or changes in the location of the disposal system from the site of soil tests applied to the issuance of the permit, could result in rejection of the system design, revocation of the issued permit and/or the imposition of additional technical requirements or component modifications before final approval would be granted, even after a sewage disposal system has been installed. The cost of such additional requirements, alterations, or modifications is the responsibility of the owner/applicant. Statistically, such additional requirements are rare.

The following procedures should be carefully read:

1. Obtain from the Department:

- Application for an On-Lot Sewage Disposal System Permit -
- (Form 3800-FM-WSFR0290) (Available in hard copy only) 2 copies - Sewage Application Record Form and Sewage Application Rider - (Form CCHD-BEHS-14A) available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage)
- Site Preparation Requirements, Procedures for Site Testing, and Absorption Area Requirements for Individual Lots available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage)
- Site Investigation and Percolation Test Report for On-Lot Disposal of Sewage - (Form 3800-FM-WSWM0290A) available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage).
- Four (4) copies of form entitled: Specifications for Proposed Sewage System available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage)
- Four (4) copies (if needed) of Sewage Pump Data Sheet or Design Sheet for Holding Tanks available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage)

2. Part 1 of the Application for an On-Lot Sewage Disposal System Permit (Form 3 800-FMWSFR0290) must be filled out by the applicant (property owner, owner in equity or an authorized agent). The two (2) copies of the Sewage Application Record form and Sewage Application Rider should be filled out at the same time and contain exactly the same information as Part 1 of the application form.

3. Note that the Sewage Application Record form has the Sewage Application Rider form on its reverse side. Two (2) copies of these forms must be submitted by the applicant or his agent along with the required Record/Rider form fee prior to the submission of any of the application forms and appropriate application fees and prior to conducting the required soils testing. The Application Rider form is utilized to fulfill the requirements of a 1978 amendment to the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act 537. It must be completed if someone other than the property owner(s) will be filing the application, conducting tests (soil profile exam and/or percolation tests), attending meetings or receiving notices and other communications concerning the permitting and installation of the system. A check or money order for the required fee, made payable to the Treasurer of Chester County must accompany these forms. A current fee schedule is available at [www.chesco.org/health/sewage](http://www.chesco.org/health/sewage). The actual application form and all other forms are not to be submitted at this time.

4. The applicant or authorized agent is responsible for performing the percolation tests and for preparing observation test pit excavations. **The applicant or assigned agent, must schedule all tests with the Chester County Health Department.** The Sewage Application Record form, the Rider forms and the appropriate fee must be received by the Department before any testing will be scheduled. **The Department reserves the right to dictate when the percolation test may be performed in order to schedule and monitor the procedures.**

5. A representative of this Department **must** inspect soil conditions and complete a soil profile description in a minimum of two deep observation test pits on each individual lot. This inspection must be conducted prior to performing the percolation test so that any limiting zones can be detected and the

depth of the percolation test holes can be determined. The observation test pits should be dug in accordance with all isolation distances and safety considerations.

6. The percolation test holes must be dug and the tests run in accordance with the Department's requirements. An agent of the Department must be present for the percolation tests to determine conformance to the requirements. Falsification of any tests or errors in following the prescribed procedures is cause for denial of the permit and the initiation of legal action against the applicant. The Site Investigation and Percolation Test Report for On-Lot Disposal of Sewage form (Form 3 800-FM-WSWM0290A) must be completed for each test. It is important that all parts of this form be completed and it is advised that it be done electronically. The soil description section may be completed by the applicant or the consultant and will be reviewed and the information verified by the Department. A supplemental sketch showing the exact location of the percolation test holes and observation test pits **in relation to permanent landmarks and property markers must be provided by the applicant.** The form will be returned to the applicant if it is incomplete or improperly filled out. Written notice of the deficiencies will be included.

7. State law requires that all deep observation test pits and percolation test holes be backfilled and covered within five (5) days after receiving notice of completion from this Department. Unless otherwise stated, this notice is given in the statements written on the bottom portion of the field report form issued by the CCHD representative for the specific observation or test being conducted.

8. Following the completion of the percolation test and verification of the soil conditions by a representative of the Department, the applicant is to submit the design of the proposed sewage system. The design of the system is to be submitted as follows:

- A. **Application for On-Lot Sewage Disposal System Permit** (Form 3 800-FMWSFR0290), the applicant or his agent must complete Sections I & III in their entirety. It is essential that these forms be completed legibly and accurately. Please make sure that the print is readable on all carbon copies.
- B. **Four (4) copies of the plot plan**, required in Section III, (8.b.), on paper measuring 8 1/2" X 11" (or folded to this size) must be attached. The plot plan should be clean, neat, legible and include at least the following items:
  - 1. property lines and adjacent streets
  - 2. dimensions and distances in feet
  - 3. location of:
    - a. all buildings, driveways, right of ways and easements
    - b. treatment tanks and dosing tanks and filter tanks, distribution boxes
    - c. all wells, springs and surface waters **on this and adjacent properties**
    - d. proposed sewage disposal system (from 2 non-parallel property lines)
    - e. all percolation test holes and test pits on this property
    - f. existing sewage disposal systems

4. plans and cross section of the proposed absorption area indicating:
    - a. depth – inches (beds or trenches)
    - b. length – feet (beds or trenches)
    - c. width – feet (beds or trenches)
  5. reference to north
  6. direction of slope and %
  7. distance to the nearest stream (if any)
  8. isolation distances as set forth in Title 25 Pa Code, Chapter 73.13
  9. specifications and instructions for installing the system
  10. other information as required by this Department.
- C. The four (4) copies of the form entitled **Specifications for Proposed Sewage System** must be properly completed and returned with the Application Form. Four (4) copies of the appropriate Sewage Pump Data Sheet or Design Sheet for Holding Tanks should be returned if pumps or holding tanks are to be utilized.
- D. The Site Investigation and Percolation Test Report for On-Lot Disposal of Sewage must also to be submitted at this time. (See #6 previous page)

*Note: If any of the above items are missing or incomplete, the application will be returned to you for correction.*

9. The properly issued permit must be shown to the local municipality when requesting a building permit, must be kept on the job site during construction and must be given to the Health Department representative at the time final inspection is made. **No system or portion thereof may be covered before final inspection and written approval is given by the department's sewage enforcement officer.**

10. Before covering the completed system, a request for a final inspection allowing at least three (3) full Department working days notice must be made. When the entire installation is approved, the Approval To Cover portion of the permit will be signed. The system must then be covered within five (5) calendar days. **Your copy of the permit and the design should be kept with your valuable papers or posted in an appropriate place and passed on to future owners.**

11. A diagram showing the exact location of all system components installed and all other improvements (new or existing) on the property, including wells and water lines must be submitted prior to obtaining final approval for the use of the system. This is called an **As-Built Diagram** and must contain all of the details required in the plot plan used for permit issuance, but should reflect conditions after construction.

12. If a permit is denied or revoked “for cause”, you may appeal in writing for a hearing before a Chester County Health Department Official and have legal counsel offer evidence in your behalf. A decision on the appeal will be provided in writing to you.

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