



Instructions For Digging A Test Hole For A Replacement Soil Evaluation

The current State of Ohio Rules governing Home Sewage Treatment Systems [OAC 3701-29-07] requires that a completed soil evaluation be conducted on all properties which require a new or replacement septic system. This evaluation allows this department to determine a multitude of factors including but not limited to the following: type of soils present on site; depth to limiting layers (perched/apparent water table, depth to bedrock etc.). This information is then utilized to determine the type and size of septic system that will be required to be installed on your property.

New construction sites require a test hole to be dug with a backhoe or excavator. In order to minimize the cost however, this department allows property owners to dig a test hole with the use of a shovel and post hole digger in order to conduct the required soil evaluation when a septic system replacement is required.

The following is a set of instructions on how to complete the required test hole:

1. Use a standard shovel to dig a test hole 24" in diameter in the area of the proposed leach field replacement area. The test hole will be twelve inches (12") deep.
2. Next, use a 4" standard post hole digger to dig the remainder of the hole to a depth of approximately 36" inside the larger 24" diameter hole. The soils removed from the center with the 4" post hole digger will be placed on the outside of the 24" diameter opening. This outside diameter will serve as a so called "clock-face". The first soil sample removed with the post hole digger will be placed in the "twelve o'clock" position. The next sample removed will be placed in the "one o'clock" position, "two o'clock" position and so forth until you reach a depth of approximately 36" (see diagram below).
3. Depending on when the test hole is completed and when the time of the site/soil evaluation is scheduled, it is best to cover the area with a large piece of plywood and/or a tarp. This will prevent entrance into the excavation and will keep the soils dry until the soils are evaluated.
4. Contact this department to conduct the required site evaluation/soil evaluation once the test hole is completed.

