

Catawba County Environmental Health
Subdivision Application, Evaluation, and Permitting Procedures

A. Applications

1. Applications must be completed for an Improvement Permit to be issued for all proposed lots. This may be done in individual phases, sections, or blocks as approved by the Environmental Health Division staff. The developer or his authorized agent must sign all applications.
2. The current fee for each improvement permit must be paid at the time the application is submitted. Applications will not be accepted until all fees are paid.
3. Complete applications must be accompanied by a plat prepared by a surveyor. A plat may be submitted for each lot individually proposed, but must show all lots proposed on a minimum 1" = 60' scale unless previously approved by the Environmental Health supervisor or his designee. Plats must show all proposed property lines, lot corners, home locations, and all roads, bodies of water (creeks, streams, lakes, and ponds), existing wells within 200', all lot dimensions, easements, and right of ways.
4. Applications for subdivisions will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis and will be activated only when complete applications are received. Incomplete applications will not be activated.

B. Evaluations

1. All lots must be properly prepared for evaluation in the following manner:
 - a. All lots must be fully accessible. Access roads must be at least "roughed in." Overgrown or very thickly wooded lots must be adequately cleared prior to evaluation to allow for proper access.
 - b. A surveyor shall stake all lot corners, and all lot sidelines shall be flagged the entire length and width of the lot. Exceptions to flagging lot sidelines may be made if all corners can be seen from any part of the lot.
 - c. All home sites, as indicated on the plat, shall be staked or flagged on the lot.
 - d. Improperly prepared subdivision lots will not be evaluated. Subdivisions with improperly prepared lots will be placed in an inactive status. Subdivisions will be reactivated with a new date when all required preparations are complete.
2. Prior to the lot evaluation, an Environmental Health Specialist will visit the subdivision and place flags indicating where "test pits" are to be dug for the soil evaluation. **(Note: This process should be carefully planned and coordinated with the Environmental Health Specialist assigned to evaluate your subdivision.)**

Test pits shall be dug in the following manner:

- a. Pits must be located as near as possible to the previously placed flags.
- b. Pits must be a minimum of 4' deep and 2' wide with sloped or stepped access in and out. For safety reasons, at no time shall the pit be deeper than 5' unless specifically requested by the Environmental Health Specialist.
- c. Pits shall be dug using a backhoe or similar equipment. "Post holes" or shallow scoops from a front-end loader will not be acceptable.

- d. After pits are dug, the developer will notify Catawba County Environmental Health and an evaluation date(s) will be scheduled.
3. The soil site evaluation will be conducted by evaluating each previously dug pit in the manner prescribed by current state rules. A soil profile from each pit will be described on a soil evaluation form for each lot application submitted. Documentation on the soil evaluation form will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Soil profile description to include soil depth and characteristics
 - b. Topographical features
 - c. Usable soil areas and locations
 - d. Possible system type(s)
 - e. Problems and/or unsuitable characteristics
 - f. Determination of suitability for system and repair areas

C. Permitting

1. Lots determined to be suitable or provisionally suitable for a wastewater disposal system may be issued an improvement permit.
2. A letter of denial will be issued for lots that are considered unsuitable for a wastewater system. The following conditions or characteristics may result in lots considered unsuitable:
 - a. Soil wetness conditions (shallow seasonal water tables)
 - b. Unsuitable topography (irregular topography, excessive gullies, ravines, excessive slopes, depressions, etc.)
 - c. Shallow soil depths
 - d. Unsuitable soil characteristics (expansive clays, poor structure, etc.)
 - e. Inadequate space available for the installation of a complete system and repair area to serve the proposed facility.
3. Permit denial letters shall be required to adequately describe the site and soil conditions leading to the denial as well as the owner or developer's appeal rights and processes.
4. Improvement permits shall indicate system location, required setbacks, home location, general system requirements, etc., on scale drawings.
5. When an application for an Authorization to Construct is submitted, the Authorization to Construct shall indicate all system specifications, location of components, permit conditions, and installation criteria.

D. Notification

1. The Environmental Health Specialist, upon completion of permits, etc., shall notify the owner / developer as indicated on the application, when permit(s) or denial letter(s) are completed.
2. The Environmental Health Specialist will also be responsible for notifying the Catawba County Planning Director when permits, etc. are complete and provide information to the local Subdivision Review Board as requested.

These procedures will be required for all major subdivisions subject to approval under the current Catawba County Subdivision Ordinance, and reviewed by the Catawba County Subdivision Review Board.