

# Schoharie County Health Department

## Additional Information for the Preparation of Soil Percolation Test Holes

A total of 4 holes are to be dug in the vicinity of the proposed location of the subsurface sewage treatment system, approximately 100 feet down hill of the house, and approximately 200 feet from the proposed drilled well water supply and water courses (stream, pond, lake, etc.). All holes should be at least 50 feet away from property lines, roads, right-of-way, driveway, etc.

### Hole # 1 and # 2 (refer to diagram below)

Dig hole # 1 and hole # 2 approximately 50 feet apart. Dig these holes 24 inches deep and 12 inches diameter. Use a shovel, posthole digger, or an auger to dig these holes. A shovel works best but a bar may be helpful to extract large stones. If bedrock, shale, or groundwater is encountered when digging these holes, stop digging; there is no need to dig any deeper. You may wish to try other holes in a different location – say at least 100 feet away.

Place 2 inches of crushed stone in the bottom of each hole. You may use the small stones that were dug out of the hole for this purpose. Presoak the holes the day before the test is scheduled by **completely** filling them with water. Presoak will require 15 to 20 gallons per hole. An additional 10 gallons **per hole** must be left at the site to perform the test.

### Hole # 3 (refer to diagram below)

Dig this hole 12 inches deep and 12 inches diameter place it about 10 feet down hill of Hole # 4. Use a shovel, posthole digger, or an auger to dig this hole. Place 2 inches of crushed stone in the bottom of each hole. You may use the small stones that were dug out of the hole for this purpose. Presoak the hole the day before the test is scheduled by completely filling it with water. Presoak will require about 10 gallons. An additional 10 gallons per hole must be left at the site to perform the test.

Presoak water required for holes 1, 2 and 3 is approximately 50 gallons. Water required to perform the test is approximately 30 gallons to be left at the site after the presoak. This means approximately 80 gallons of water is required to soak and test the holes. Clean barrels, garbage cans, pails or other containers can be used to store and transport the water to the site. Water can be from any clean stream, pond, or tap.

### Hole # 4 – the Deep Test Hole (see diagram below)

Dig this hole between Hole # 1 and Hole # 2. A backhoe or other excavation machine works best. Dig this hole a minimum of 6 feet deep and two feet wide. Dig a shelf or step half way down. Stop digging if bedrock, shale or groundwater is encountered when digging this hole; there is no need to dig any deeper. You may wish to try other holes in a different location – say at least 100 feet away. Do not add water to this hole and do not add stone to this hole. The Deep Test Hole is for observation to help determine the depth of usable soil for design purposes. Hole # 4 may be dug the day of the test and then backfilled after observation.

**New York City Watershed Applicants (see diagram below):** must have a duplicate set of test holes prepared, separated by at least 100 feet from the first set of 4 holes (total of 8 holes). This will require double the water or approximately 160 gallons. Most of the Town of Conesville and the southern half of the Town of Gilboa are in the watershed. A small part in the south of the Town of Jefferson is also in the watershed.

**Barton Hill Watershed:** if the proposed building site is located in the areas of the Town of Schoharie (north of State Route 443 and parts east of State Route 30) or Town of Wright (north of State Route 443 and State Route 146 and along Larry Hill Road), the deep test hole must be at least eight feet deep. The Barton Hill Watershed is the watershed for the Village of Schoharie’s drinking water.

