

Test Trench Permit Application Requirements

Permit application requirements for test trenches to determine the suitability for an on-site sewage disposal system according to the Washoe County District Board of Health Regulations Governing Sewage, Wastewater, and Sanitation (SWS) are listed below. All test trenches require an inspection by Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) and a percolation test unless waived by NNPH. The applicant must obtain a permit from NNPH prior to excavating any test trench and specific depths for any percolation test(s) may be required to ensure a representative distribution rate. Permit applications must be submitted via our online permitting portal OneNV.us. A 24-hour notice is required to schedule an inspection; please contact Environmental Health Services at 775-328-2434 with any questions and to schedule inspections.

Permit Application Requirements:

1. A site plan that includes the APN, owner's name, and address for the parcel to be evaluated. Please also include the name and current phone number of the applicant, if different from owner.
2. The site plan shall identify the location of all proposed test trenches with dimensions from the two closest property lines or as otherwise approved by NNPH.
3. Test trench location(s) should be feasible with respect to the area and location based off the disposal field requirements in Section 040 and Table 1 of the SWS.

Test Trench Design Specifications:

1. Test trench(es) should be located within 100 feet of proposed disposal field, but not directly where the field is planned to prevent disturbing native soils. If a proposed leach field is over 100 feet from the test trench, another test trench may be required.
2. Test trench(es) must be excavated to a minimum of 13 feet or as deep as allowed with equipment and site conditions. Disposal field trench depth will be sized at 4 feet shallower than the maximum test trench depth. All excavation must stop if groundwater or bedrock is encountered. The trench must remain open for at least 24 hours after excavation to allow for groundwater equilibrium.
3. Test trench shall be a minimum of 2 feet wide, sloped and benched to allow for access and inspection (see example below).
4. Permit holder is responsible for all necessary safety precautions. Test trench should be backfilled upon completion of all required testing and inspections.

