Town of New Canaan

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Health Department Requirements Prior to Submission of Building Permit Applications for Additions/Alterations to Residences Served by a Septic System

Section 19-13-B100a of the Connecticut Public Health Code became effective on August 3, 1998. This code pertains to Building Conversions/Changes in Use, Building Additions, Garages/Accessory Structures, Swimming Pools, and Sewage Disposal Area Preservation on lots which are served by on-site subsurface sewage disposal (septic) systems. This code requires that a site assessment be made on those properties served by on-site sewage disposal facilities. This assessment will determine whether further development of the property would compromise the ability of that property to effectively treat sewage waste. The intent is not to determine the present status of the existing leaching system, but to determine that if or when the existing system fails, a new code-compliant septic system could be installed on the property which will meet the requirements of the proposed future use.

Soil testing information is required prior to approval for demolitions, building conversions, additions, and construction of accessory structures on the property, or any other significant soil disturbance. It must be understood that test information and the subsequent determination of a code complying area is required even if the proposed construction does not include any additional bedrooms (request of additional living space, detached garage or shed, deck, swimming pool, etc.). The key is that whenever a portion of the property will be altered (by virtue of the fact that a structure is being built which will reduce the area available for future septic system needs), a code complying area must be determined prior to the issuance of any construction permits.

Therefore, prior to submitting a Building Permit Application, the property must either have an existing code-compliant septic system or have an approved plan for such a system approved by the Health Department. If there is neither an existing nor an approved plan for code-compliant septic system, the following must be done before a Building Permit Application will be accepted (NOTE: Most septic systems designed or installed after 1998 are code-compliant):

1. Soil testing on the property must be done by a licensed septic installer or professional engineer and witnessed by the Health Department. The homeowner should contact a septic installer or engineer to arrange for such testing. The installer or engineer will then make arrangements with the Health Department to have the soil testing witnessed.

2. After soil testing is completed, the installer or engineer will draw a plan for a code-compliant septic system and submit it to the Health Department for approval. Once the plan is approved by the Health Department, a Building Permit Application procedure may commence.

Building Permit Applications must include the following:

- 2 copies of building plans
- **2 copies of plot plan/survey showing the location of existing structures/improvements including existing septic systems, existing wells/water lines, proposed wells, code-compliant septic plans, property lines, and proposed additions, storm water detention systems, above or below ground propane tanks, water treatment systems.**
- Zoning, Building, and Health Department forms completed

NOTE: If a septic system is to be installed and the well is to be abandoned and a new one drilled, then permits for each are required prior to submission of any building permit application.