

Title 5 Permitting Overview: From Perc to COC

MHOA 2025 Annual Conference

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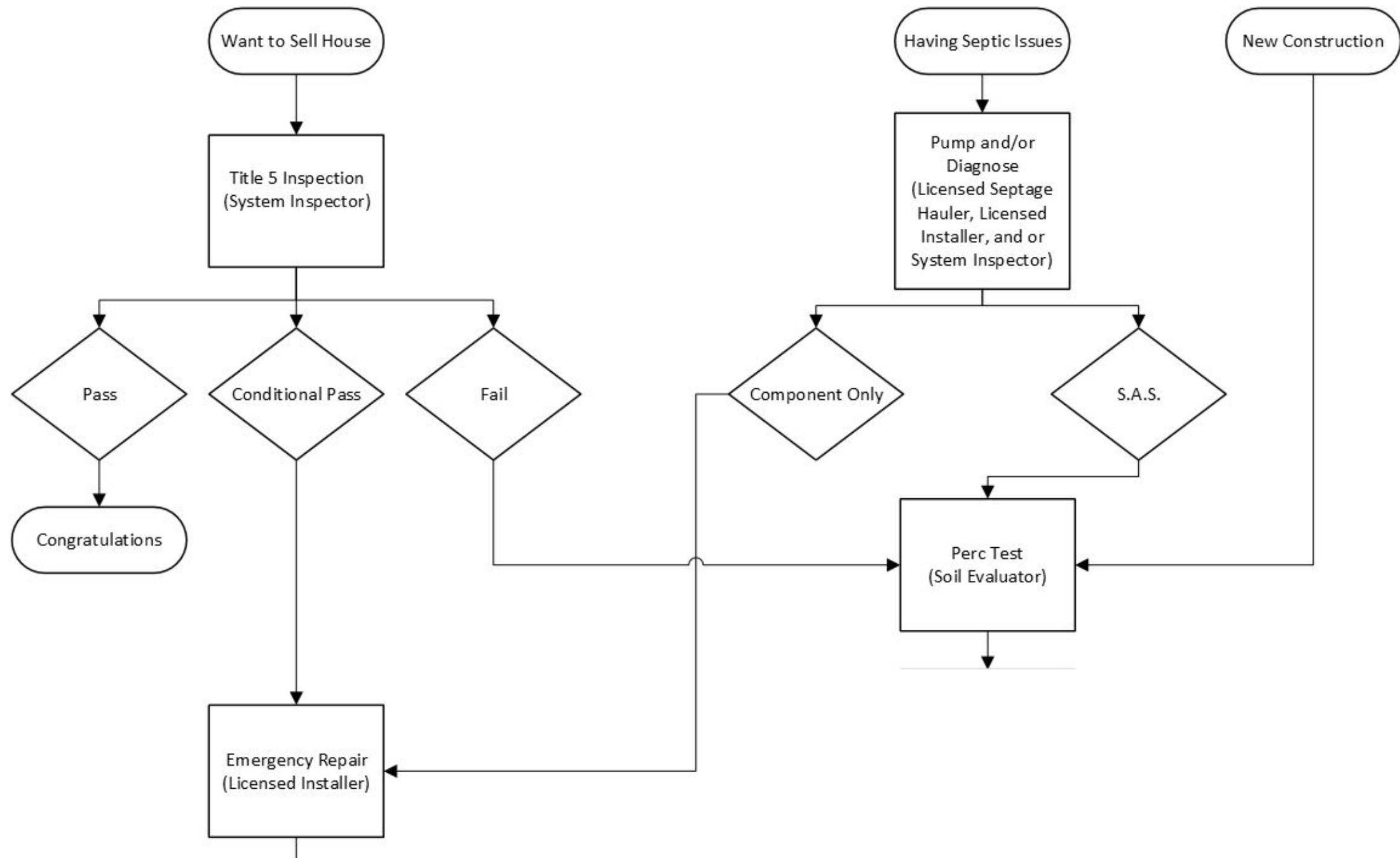
Objectives

- Provide a basic overview of the septic workflow
- Primarily geared toward new health agents
- Every city/town varies in Title 5 enforcement

Disclaimer: This presentation is based on Title 5 and “standard practice” as I have observed in Hampden County. Content does not reflect the official opinion of Franklin-Hampshire Training Hub, DEP or WMPHA.

Glossary

BoH	Board of Health
SAS	Soil Absorption System: Leach Field, Trenches, etc.
COC	Certificate of Compliance
DSCP	Disposal System Construction Permit



Title 5 Inspection

- Some towns require a BoH witness or prior notification. Others just want the report.
- Inspection reports turned in within 30 days
- Passed Inspection: Review then file
- Conditional Pass: Emergency Repair
- Fail: Perc Test

 **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**
Title 5 Official Inspection Form
Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Form - Not for Voluntary Assessments

Property Address _____

Owner's Name _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Date of Inspection _____

Owner information is required for every page.

Inspection results must be submitted on this form. Inspection forms may not be altered in any way. Please see completeness checklist at the end of the form.

Important: When filling out forms on the computer, use only the tab key to move your cursor - do not use the return key.



A. Inspector Information

Name of Inspector _____

Company Name _____

Company Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____ License Number _____

B. Certification

I certify that: I am a DEP approved system inspector in full compliance with Section 15.340 of Title 5 (310 CMR 15.000); I have personally inspected the sewage disposal system at the property address listed above; the information reported below is true, accurate and complete as of the time of my inspection; and the inspection was performed based on my training and experience in the proper function and maintenance of on-site sewage disposal systems. After conducting this inspection I have determined that the system:

1. ☐ Passes

2. ☐ Conditionally Passes

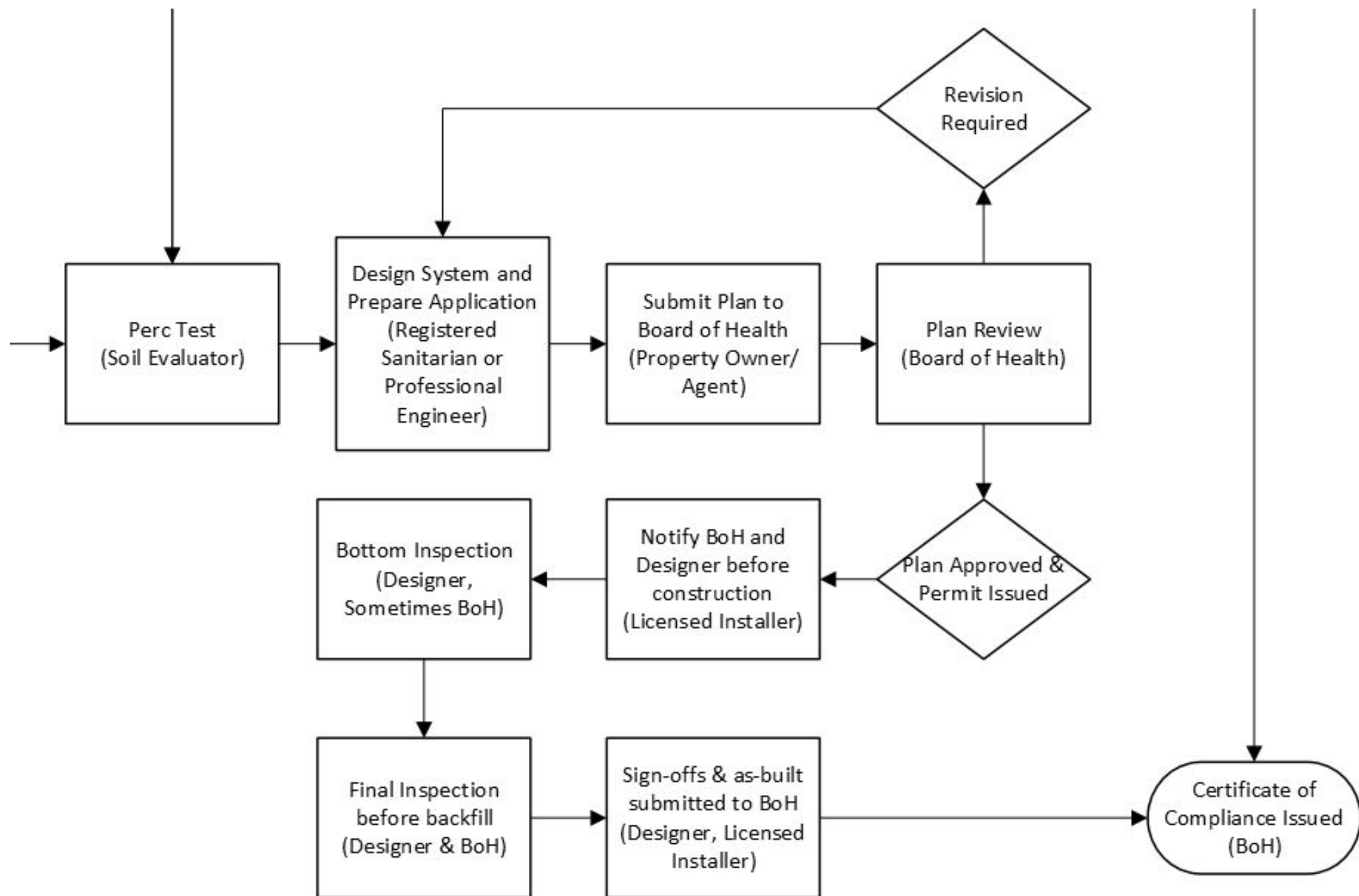
3. ☐ Needs Further Evaluation by the Local Approving Authority

4. ☐ Fails

Inspector's Signature _____ Date _____

The system inspector shall submit a copy of this inspection report to the Approving Authority (Board of Health or DEP) within 30 days of completing this inspection. If the system has a design flow of 10,000 gpd or greater, the inspector and the system owner shall submit the report to the appropriate regional office of the DEP. The original form should be sent to the system owner and copies sent to the buyer, if applicable, and the approving authority.

Please note: This report only describes conditions at the time of inspection and under the conditions of use at that time. This inspection does not address how the system will perform in the future under the same or different conditions of use.

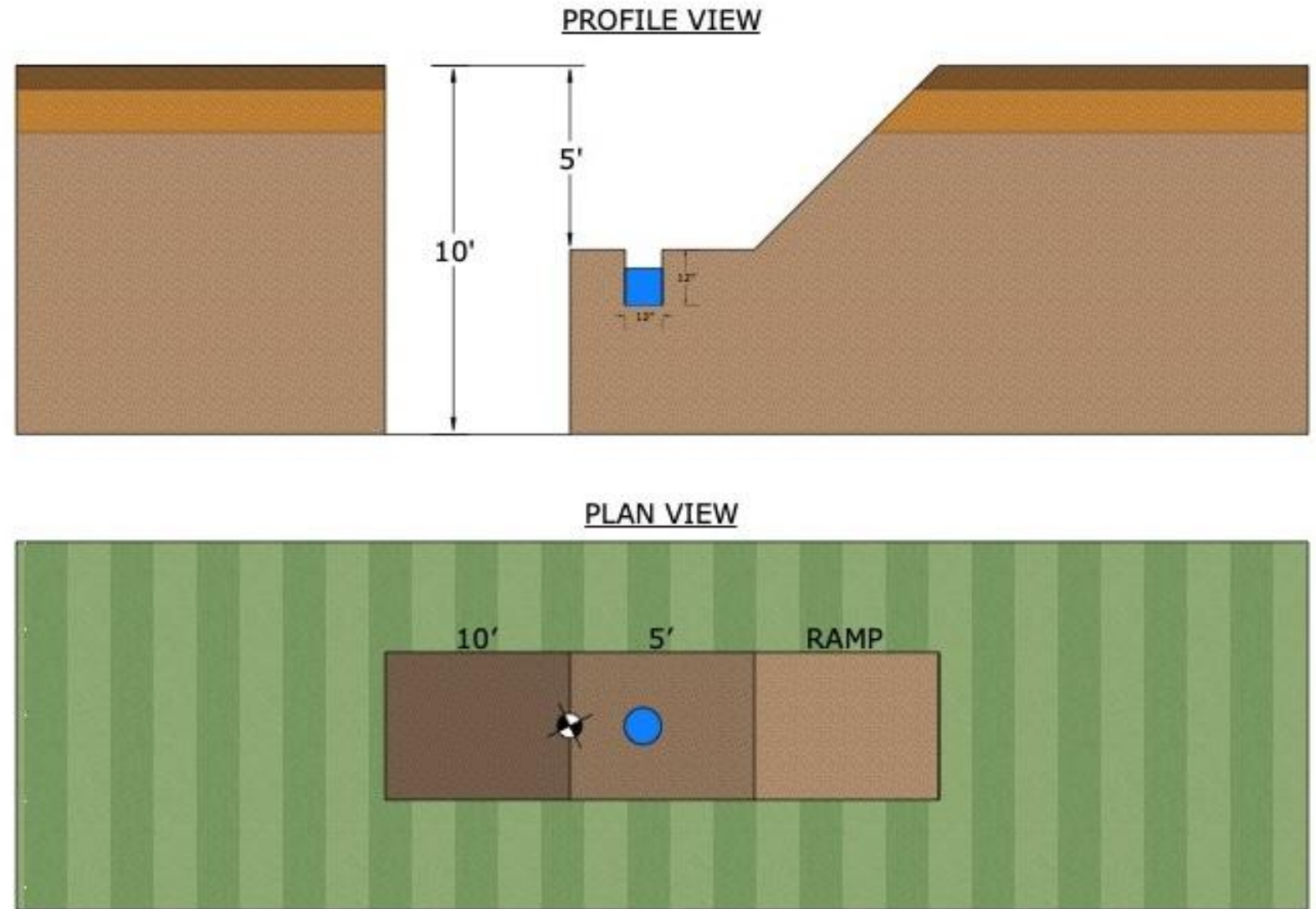


Percolation (Perc) Test

- Schedule and/or submit application to BoH
- 1 Percolation & 2 Deep Observation Hole
- Testing performed “in presence” of approving authority
- Keep notes (maybe don't use Form 11 & 12)
- Test is valid for an indefinite period provided soils remain undisturbed and unaltered
- Everyone on-site should be thinking about the design of the system

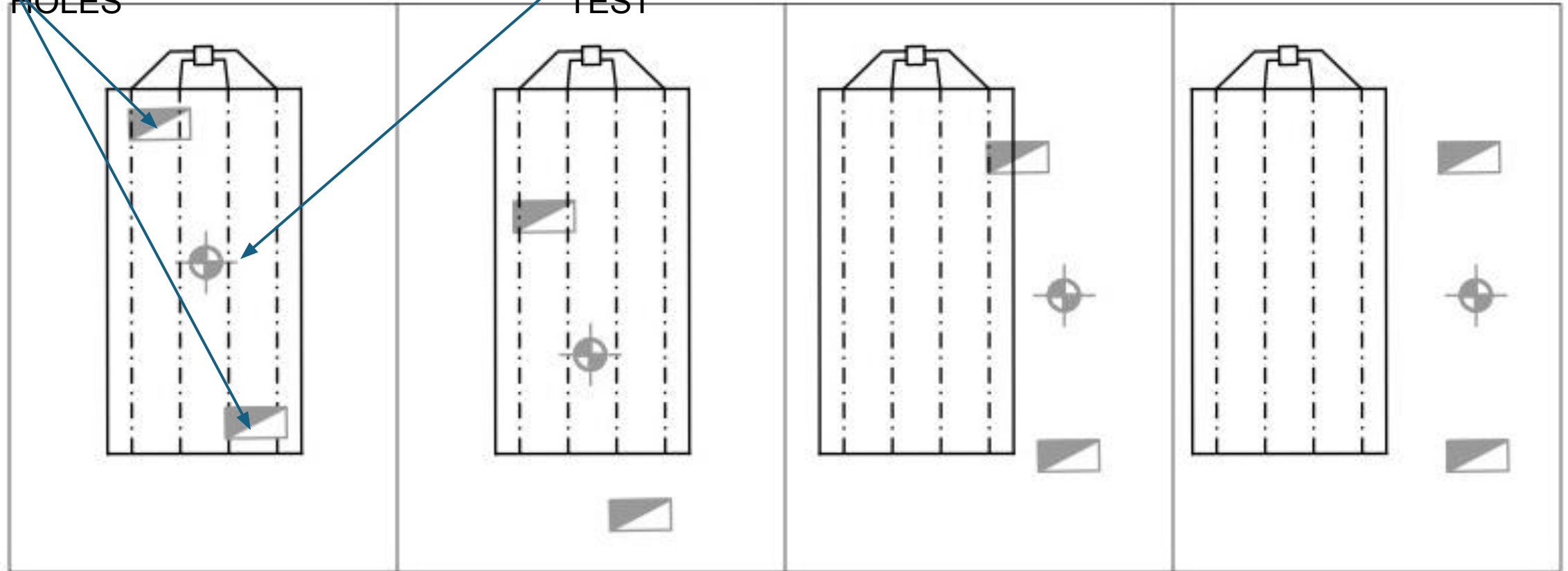


Deep Observation Hole



DEEP OBSERVATION
HOLES

PERC
TEST



IDEA
L

PROBABL
Y

MAYB
E

PROBABLY
NOT

Application, Plan Review, Issue Permit

- Designer prepares plan and application
 - BoH own application? Or uses DEP form?
 - How many copies?
 - E-Permit?
- Provides copies to homeowner/agent
- Homeowner signs & submits to BoH
- BoH uses checklist to review plans
- Issues DSCP

 Commonwealth of Massachusetts
City/Town of _____
Application for Disposal System Construction Permit
Form 1A

Number _____
\$ _____
Fee _____

DEP has provided this form for use by local Boards of Health if they choose to do so. Before using the form, check with your local Board of Health to make sure that they will accept it.

A. Facility Information

Important:
When filling out forms on the computer, use only the tab key to move your cursor - do not use the return key.

Application is hereby made for a permit to: ☐ Construct a new on-site sewage disposal system
☐ Repair or replace an existing on-site sewage disposal system
☐ Repair or replace an existing system component

1. Location of Facility:

Address or Lot # _____
City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

2. Owner Information

Name _____
Address (if different from above) _____
City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____

3. Installer Information

Name _____ Name of Company _____
Address _____
City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____

4. Designer Information

Name _____ Name of Company _____
Address _____
City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____

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Local Upgrade Approval vs. Variance

LUA

- Quicker process, but is only for specific things
- Setbacks, groundwater separation reduction, 25% size reduction, use of 1 deep hole
- Abutter notification may be required
- BoH may allow agent to grant, some vote at meeting

Variance

- More involved process
- Require abutter notification and public hearing
- Additional conditions may be imposed

Install & Inspections

- Installer should have copy of permit and approved plan with engineer stamp & BoH signature on-site during construction.
- Installer should notify BoH and designer before beginning construction.
- Bottom Inspection: designer & some BoH
- Final Inspection: designer & BoH
- Cannot backfill until BoH inspects

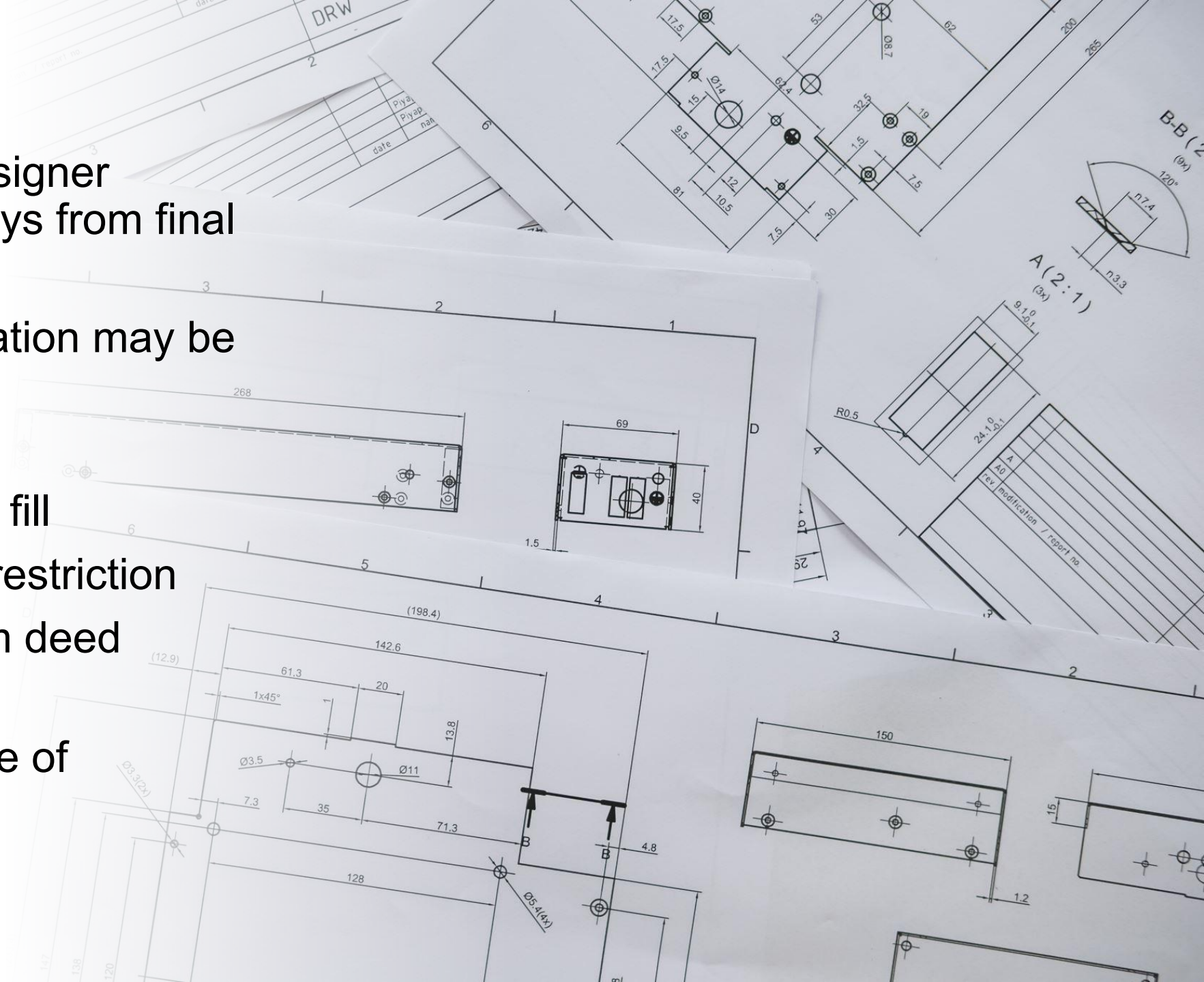


What to look for during inspections

DEP Form “Septic Installation Checklist” Extensive guide for new inspectors

- ✓ Tank, d-box, and SAS are same size and location per plan
- ✓ Baffles, tees, and filters installed per plan
- ✓ Soils match deep observation hole log and SAS at correct elevation.
- ✓ Tank, d-box, distribution line outlets are level
- ✓ Tank in the right direction
- ✓ Top of all access covers within 9" of grade
 - If risers installed, within 6" of grade
 - If a DEP-approved filter is installed, risers must be to grade over outlet

- Submit installer & designer sign-offs within 30 days from final inspection
- Additional documentation may be required:
 - As-Built
 - Sieve analysis for fill
 - 2-bedroom deed restriction
 - Alternative system deed notification
- BoH issues Certificate of Compliance

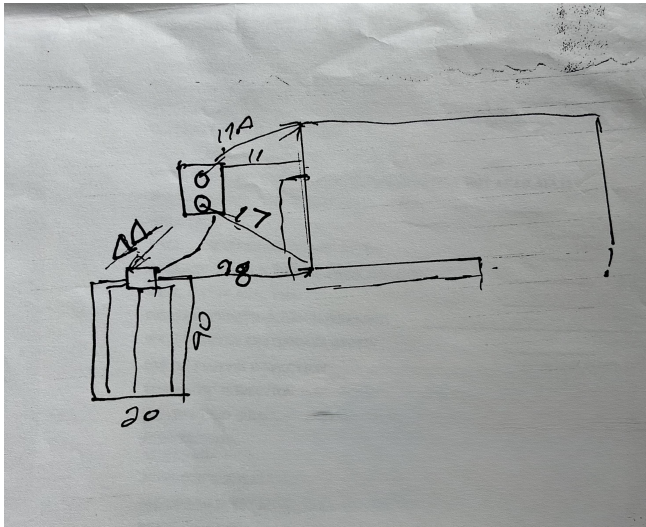


As-Built vs. Swing Ties

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As-Built

- Professional Drafted Document
- Submitted by designer
- Required when there are changes to the approved design



Swing Ties

- Often get called an As-Built
- Required when no As-Built needed
- Approved plan showing distance from known structure to the system component
- Can be a sketch with ties to tank (inlet & outlet), d-box, corner of SAS, and inspection port
- Submitted by installer and/or designer

Alternative Systems

- Take your time when reviewing a new technology for the first time
- Make sure to look at:
 - Approval letter w/ technology-specific conditions
 - Design Manual
 - Standard conditions for alternative SAS

Alternative Systems

Cons

- Increased cost
- Deed restriction/notification
- Operations and maintenance

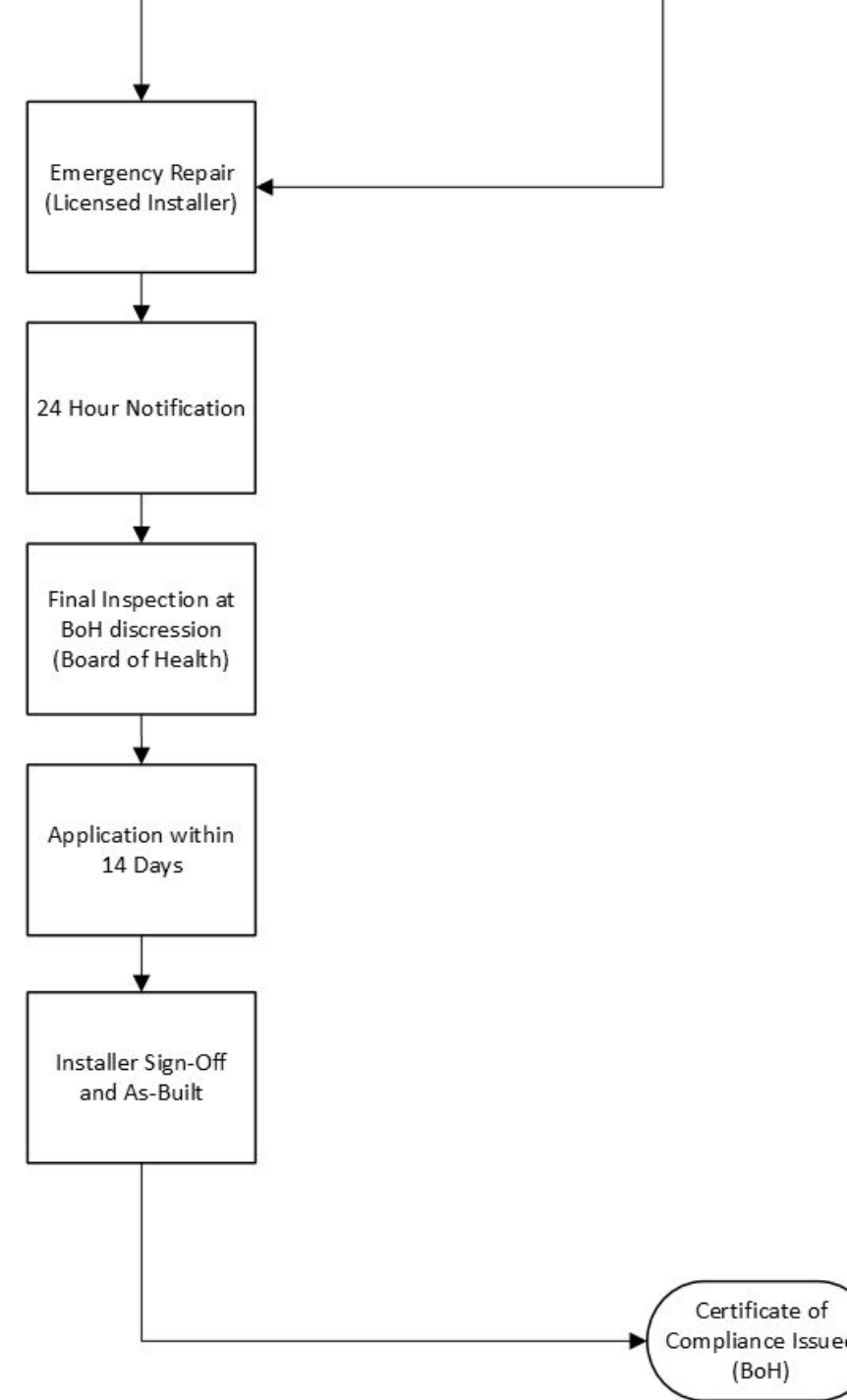
Pros

- Reduced groundwater separation
- Reduced naturally occurring pervious material
- Reduced footprint

Emergency Repair

Shall be completed within 30 days of failure, and limited to the following:

- Pumping to prevent backup or breakout
- Repair or replacement of:
 - clogged building sewer or distribution line
 - damaged building sewer
 - septic tank
 - D-box
 - broken tee



Pumping



License
required in
every town
worked in



Code requires
pumping logs
submitted
within 14 days

Final Thoughts

- Keep lines of communication open between installer, designer, and BoH
- Turn paperwork in on time
- Don't be afraid to ask for help

Questions?

Thank you!

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