

**GUIDE TO  
UNDERSTANDING  
WET WEATHER  
TESTING**



**COUNTY OF SISKIYOU  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Public Health Department, Environmental Health Division receives many inquiries regarding Wet Weather Testing. The information in this brochure is intended to serve as a guide and answer commonly asked questions.

Wet Weather Testing is a term that is used to describe the time of year in which some parcels must be evaluated to determine if it is capable of accommodating an on-site sewage disposal system. The actual tests consists of percolation tests and/or monitoring soil test pits or monitoring tubes for high groundwater conditions.

Wet weather testing is required by Environmental Health under the following circumstances.

1. The parcel has a high percentage of clay in the soil. These types of soils are known as class 3 or 4 soils. Wet weather testing is required to ensure that the soils will be able to dispose of the sewage effluent during the winter when soils are saturated.
2. The parcel is in an area of suspected or known high groundwater. Wet weather testing is done to ensure that the on-site septic system will function when groundwater rises during the spring snow melt season and to protect groundwater from being contaminated by an on-site septic system.

**What areas have mandatory wet weather testing?**

1. Parcels located in the Klamath River Country Estates (KRCE), Iron Gate Lake Estates and Copco Subdivisions are required to perform sewage disposal testing during the wet weather season due to the clay content in the soil.
2. Parcels located within known or suspected high groundwater areas. Parcels may be suspected of having high groundwater based on the inspectors observations of mottling or Re-dox features in the soil, proximity to water courses, topography and/or vegetation.

**When is the Wet Weather Testing Season?**

The wet weather testing season occurs January 1 through April 30 of each year only after 50% of the annual average of precipitation has been received.

Environmental Health tracks the amount of precipitation for several locations throughout the County.

Wet weather testing may be opened in one area of the County and remain closed in other areas.

Testing will not be allowed until 50% of the rainfall has fallen. There are years when wet weather testing season will not open.

**Who can do the testing?**

This varies. In most cases it must be performed by a California Registered Civil Engineer, Registered Environmental Health Specialist, or Soils Engineer. You should discuss who must perform the testing with the inspector.

**Can I test outside the wet weather testing period?**

Yes, if your parcel is required to perform percolation tests during wet weather, you can submit soil from the proposed leachfield area (typically from a depth of three-five feet deep below ground surface) to a certified soils laboratory. If the soils are determined to be class I or II soils, you can perform perc testing outside the wet weather season. The inspector will be present during the soil sampling.

**Public Health Inspectors:**

**William Navarre, Land Use Division Manager - 530-841-2112.**

Mt. Shasta, Weed, Lake Shastina, Dunsmuir, McCloud, Edgewood, Mt. Shasta Forest, Medicine Lake.

**Jerry Lemos, Senior Environmental Health Specialist - 530-841-2116.**

Scott Valley, Butte Valley, Tulelake, Gazelle, Mt. Shasta Vista, Juniper Valley, Big Sky Ranchos.

**Dan Wessell, Environmental Health Specialist II - 530-841-2118.**

Klamath River, Seiad Valley, Happy Camp, Horse Creek, Salmon River, Yreka, KRCE, Iron Gate Lake Estates, Copco Lake, Montague, Big Springs Ranchos, Juniper Ranchos, Hornbrook, Hilt.