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## SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMITS IN CALDWELL

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There are 4 options available under North Carolina law for obtaining a septic permit. Caldwell County has experienced a backlog of permits, but in the meantime property owners should decide which of the following options works best for them.

Options # 2-4 involve the owner contracting with a licensed soil scientist (LSS) and/or a licensed engineer. This process can be confusing, so please ask to speak with, or schedule a meeting with one of our licensed staff to discuss the specifics of your selection.

### **Option 1:**

If you're not in a hurry, you may complete an application in person, at our office, or print an application online at [www.caldwellcountync.org](http://www.caldwellcountync.org). You will then need to obtain a "Pre-Permit letter" and map/plat from the Planning Department. Once your application is complete, which includes acknowledgement of the property marking instructions, administrative staff will collect the appropriate fees. Once the property has been marked correctly, you should contact our office.

The inspection and permitting process will be performed by one of our Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) in the order that the application was received.

**NOTE:** If you are applying for a permit, but are not the legal owner, you will be required to have the legal owner sign a document giving you the right to apply for a septic permit.

- Improvement Permit (IP) - fee of \$300, which includes site visit, soil evaluation and proposed system area. This is an initial optional step for people in the planning stage who just want to know if their preferred house plans and layout are feasible. If someone has a valid Improvement Permit and would like to upgrade to a construction permit, the fee is \$100.
- Construction Authorization Permit (CA) - fee of \$300, which includes site visit(s), soil evaluation site/system design, layout, verification, and final inspection of installation prior to issuance of the Operations Permit.



## **Option 2:**

This option combines the work of a LSS and the work of an EHS to complete a permit, and is called the "regular soil scientist option." It generally speeds up the process and allows the issuance of your permit in a shorter time frame. This is a 2018 session law.

The owner/legal representative will complete an application in person, at our office, or online at [www.caldwellcountync.org](http://www.caldwellcountync.org). You will contract with an LSS to perform the soil evaluation and make recommendations for the system design. Once the report is received by our office, from the LSS, then our EHS reviews the report to assure state regulations are met (which may require further consultation and/or site visits with the LSS). Any changes that are found to be necessary will be made. The designs of the site and system will be finalized, and the permit will be issued by the Environmental Health Department.

## **Option 3:**

Session Law 2020 Covid 19 SS permit/inspections. In this option, you submit the paperwork and the Health Department has 5 business days to submit. This option requires a LSS, which does the site visit, issue permit and complete inspection.

## **Option 4:**

Option four, engineer option permit (EOP) and requires LSS with a \$90.00 fee. Since this method is the most expedited version, it is also the most expensive method. This method may be necessary for some lots where specific limitations require an engineered design.

In this option, the owner may contract with a licensed engineer, and the engineer is responsible for all work required. The permit will even be signed and issued by the engineer, and will not be issued by the Environmental Health office. All liability lies with the engineer.

The same requirements shall be followed for the application, as described in Option #3, except that the language required to be included is "pursuant to N.C.G.S § 130A-336.1" or "pursuant to 15A NCAC 18a.1971." The engineer's report and final permit must also include this language.

### NOTE:

- The fees assessed by the County do not include any fees or costs from the Lessors Engineer.
- We cannot recommend any individual Engineers or Licensed Soil Scientists so we recommend that you contact them directly to find out any information you may need, including pricing and availability.

