

# From the Home Inspector:

## New Rules Regarding Septic System Inspections

The North Carolina Division of Environmental Health is now regulating and certifying persons conducting the installation, repair and inspection of all septic systems in the State of North Carolina. Education credits are required to qualify for the certification exam. Education is currently being conducted by the North Carolina Septic Tank Assn. More information can be obtained at their web page: [www.ncsta.net/](http://www.ncsta.net/)  
As of January 1, 2008 all persons inspecting septic systems are required to be certified.

The law reads...

### **§ 90A-72. Certification required; applicability.**

**(a) Certification Required. – No person shall construct, install, or repair or offer to construct, install, or repair an on-site wastewater system in the State without being certified as a contractor at the required level of certification for the specified system. No person shall conduct an inspection or offer to conduct an inspection of an on-site wastewater system without being certified as an inspector at the required level of certification for the specified system.**

The general statues in its entirety can be read at the following link:

[www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2005/Bills/House/HTML/H688v6.html](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2005/Bills/House/HTML/H688v6.html).

Failure to obtain certification can result in being charged with a class 2 misdemeanor.

Although there is not currently any mandated guidelines for inspecting septic systems. There is a "best practice" guideline presented by the NC Septic Tank Assn. The certification Board will establish a minimum requirement for "depth of inspection" for an adequate inspection.

Some best practices that are expected to be adopted are:

- Obtain any operation and maintenance records (community, commercial, and/or specialized private systems).
- Walk the property and compare to the original layout.

- Access the tank openings and observe the biology of the wastewater and the level.
- Pump the tank(s) and note the interior structure of the tank(s).
- Examine the area around the tank for settling that may be interpreted as improper backfill, leaking tanks, erosion or improper grading.
- The effluent filter should be examined. If maintenance is needed the filter cartridge should be carefully removed and either replaced or washed back into the inlet opening of the septic tank.
- All components should be examined and evaluated.
- Digital photos should be taken and included in the site file.
- After inspection, the area should be returned to original condition, with any spilled effluent treated with lime or other approved treatment.

*Very few home inspectors have yet been certified to test septic systems since this new law took effect. Check with you home inspector or log on to: [http://www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/oet/septic\\_tank\\_cert/septic\\_tank\\_cert\\_main.htm](http://www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/oet/septic_tank_cert/septic_tank_cert_main.htm) for the list of certified septic system inspectors.*

Respectfully Submitted By:  
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