



## Lincoln County Environmental Health

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### SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMITS IN LINCOLN COUNTY- 2019 GUIDELINES

There are **4 options** available under North Carolina law for obtaining a septic permit. Lincoln 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. The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners has also passed a temporary policy providing a REFUND OF UP TO \$500.00 (five hundred dollars) PER LOT for those owners who apply for a **"session law permit"** between **Sept. 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019**. The refunds apply only to property owners who use the "Fast Track Session Law" options (explained below in Options #3 and 4).

#### Option 1: NOT IN A HURRY?

If you're not in a hurry, you may complete an application in person, at our office, or online at [www.lincolncounty.org](http://www.lincolncounty.org). You will then need to obtain a "Pre-Permit letter" and map/plat from the Building and Inspection Department. Once your application is complete, which includes acknowledgement of the property marking instructions, a permit specialist front office 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.

The following fees shall be assessed:

Improvement Permit (IP) – fee of \$100, 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.

Construction Authorization Permit (CA) – fee of \$200, which includes site visit(s), soil evaluation, site/system design, layout, verification, and final inspection of installation prior to issuance of this Operations Permit.

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#### MISSION STATEMENT

*The Lincoln County Health Department provides quality health services to promote a healthy community.*



#### VISION STATEMENT

*Lincoln County Health Department services will promote healthy lifestyles through prevention, preparedness, and education.*

**Option 2: WOULD YOU LIKE IT A LITTLE FASTER AND YOU'RE WILLING TO PAY MORE?**

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. **NOTE:** The County refund of \$500 does not apply here, it only applies to options #3 and 4 described below.

The owner/legal representative will complete an application in person, at our office, or online at [www.lincolncounty.org](http://www.lincolncounty.org). You will then need to obtain a "Pre-Permit letter" from the Building and Inspection Department, and 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.

\*The fees listed above in Option 1 will also apply to Option 2, but these fees do not include the costs and fees of the LSS.

**Option 3: NEED IT ASAP? WILLING TO PAY A HIGHER PRICE? YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR UP TO \$500 REFUND PER LOT.**

This "FAST TRACK SESSION LAW PERMIT" is a newer option approved by the state, where the owner may contract with a licensed soil scientist (LSS) to *perform the entire permit process*.

A "Pre-Permit" letter with plat/map is required as in Options #1 and #2 above. The owner or legal representative should contact our office and advise of your intention to obtain a permit "with an LSS, pursuant to Session Law."

When submitting your application, you must include the owner's signature and statement that the permit is being performed "pursuant to Session Law 2018-114" or "pursuant to N.C.G.S. §130A-335(a2)." ***The LSS report and final permit must also include this language.*** A list of all licensed soil scientists in the surrounding area who have are certified to do "session law" permits is available at our office or online. The LSS, contracted with by the owner, will work directly with the property owner, or its legal representative, to complete the soil evaluation and system design. That evaluation and design shall be submitted to our office. It may be submitted at the time of application, or at a later time. Our licensed EHS staff will not be involved with the inspection, other than to confirm that all information required by state law is included and to confirm that the permit is issued based solely on the report of the LSS and pursuant to Session Law 2018-114/N.C.G.S. §130A- 335(a2).

**NOTE:** The fees assessed by the County in Option #1 also apply in Option #3, and do not include any fees or costs from the LSS.

**NOTE:** We cannot recommend any individual Licensed Soil Scientists so we recommend that you contact them directly to find out any information you may need, including pricing and availability.

**WANT A REFUND?** To qualify for the County's refund of up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00), the LSS permit **MUST** be completed under Session Law 2018-114 or N.C.G.S. §130A-335(a2), and that must be clearly indicated on the application (as stated above). The permit application must have been received between **September 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019**. Once the permit has been issued, the owner may contact our office to request a refund. The form required for the refund is available in person or online. The following documents must be attached to the form for verification by our office:

- i. Copy of issued permit (with language referencing "pursuant to Session Law 2018-114" or "pursuant to N.C.G.S. 130A-335(a2).")
- ii. Copy of paid invoice from the LSS, referencing owner name or legal representative listed on the permit application. The invoice should include an itemized list showing the specific lot(s), parcel ID #(s), cost per lot, and address(es) of property.
- iii. Copy of receipt showing payment in full to the LSS indicating payment has been made by the owner or legal representative to the LSS. A copy of a cancelled check or an email from the LSS to our office indicating payment has been made to the LSS are also acceptable.

#### **Option 4: ENGINEERED OPTION PERMIT (EOP)**

This "FAST TRACK ENGINEERED OPTION PERMIT" is usually the "fastest track" available. 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.

The county will assess a fee of \$90.00.

**NOTE:** We cannot recommend any individual Engineers so we recommend that you contact them directly to find out any information you may need, including pricing and availability.

**WANT A REFUND?** This option is also eligible for the county refund of up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per lot, if applied for between September 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. The same refund form and required documentation listed in Option #3 above must be submitted to this office upon completion of the permit.

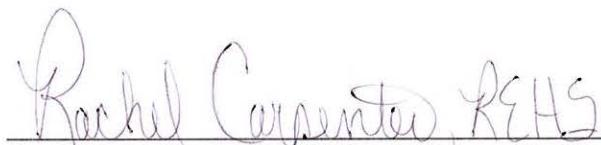
## Additional Information

Additional staff hired last fall are in the process of completing required state training. Temporary part-time Environmental Health Specialists have been retained to help offset the shortage. The Commissioners voted to reimburse consumers for selecting Options #3 and #4, thus freeing up Environmental Health Staff to work on other permits in the backlog. Progress has been made in resolving the backlog! Options #1 and #2 are always available, but if you need to have your permit issued very quickly, Options #3 and 4 may be the best route for you.

Our goal is provide you with the highest quality permit, in the most expedient time frame, and in compliance with all State rules and regulations.

You may contact our office with any questions at 704-736-8426. If the front office staff cannot answer your specific questions, please ask to speak with the Environmental Manager, Rachel Carpenter. The Health Director, Maggie Dollar, is located in the main Health Department building at 200 Gamble Drive in Lincolnton and is also available to return calls as requested.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work together to get back to normal staffing and permitting turn-around time.



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\*Forms and applications are available in office or online at [www.lincolncounty.org](http://www.lincolncounty.org)