

2.1.2 Soil Design Groups and Subgroups

This section is provided as a guide to field environmental health personnel in making technical allowances for standard systems and for health districts to use in selecting alternative systems. The required absorption area of a subsurface sewage disposal system depends on the texture of the soils in the proposed disposal system location. In a similar manner, required separation distances between the disposal area and features of concern, such as wells, surface water, and ground water, depend on soil texture. Soils surrounding the disposal system and those below it may not be the same.

The soil design group or subgroup (Table 2-4) used to determine the vertical separation distances describe the finest-textured soils adjacent to and beneath the drainfield for the effective soil depth. The soil design group or subgroup (Table 2-4) used to determine the horizontal separation distances to surface water is the coarsest-textured soils adjacent to and beneath the drainfield for the effective soil depth. Effective soil depths are described in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3, and 2.2.5 for standard and basic alternative systems. Some complex alternative treatment systems have effective soil depth reductions that impact vertical separation distances. Complex alternative treatment system effective soil depth reductions are described within each treatment system's individual guidance section.

All other soil textures and some soil features (i.e., gravel, coarse sand, all clays, organic muck, claypan, hardpan, and duripan) are unsuitable for installing a standard drainfield system.