

SEPTIC LICENSE PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	15

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. At what percentage full must a holding tank alarm trigger?**
 - A. 95%
 - B. 90%
 - C. 85%
 - D. 75%
- 2. What strategy can a certified installer use to accommodate a steep slope during septic system installation?**
 - A. Ignore slope stability
 - B. Design special modifications for the site
 - C. Deeply bury all components
 - D. Use smaller components only
- 3. When can a certified installer request an initial inspection by a certified inspector?**
 - A. Only after the system installation
 - B. Before completing the affidavit
 - C. As soon as the system is planned
 - D. Upon installation completion or affidavit issue
- 4. What is the minimum lateral trench depth required?**
 - A. 12 inches
 - B. 24 inches
 - C. 30 inches
 - D. 36 inches
- 5. Is a professional inspection required before the installation of fill soil in a septic system?**
 - A. Yes, always
 - B. No, it's optional
 - C. Only for large projects
 - D. Only if there are known issues

- 6. Is it acceptable to substitute a percolation test for a site evaluation?**
- A. Yes, always
 - B. No, it is not acceptable
 - C. Yes, if there are site constraints
 - D. Only in emergency situations
- 7. Once a local inspector approves the system, who is liable for any repairs?**
- A. The local inspector
 - B. The homeowner
 - C. The installing contractor
 - D. No one is liable
- 8. What is the total design daily waste flow (TDW) for a three-bedroom home using water flush toilets?**
- A. 249 TDW with 386 linear feet
 - B. 330 TDW with 446 linear feet
 - C. 360 TDW with 486 linear feet
 - D. 165 TDW with 223 linear feet
- 9. What is the appropriate corrective action for onsite vegetation prior to installing a septic system?**
- A. Clear all vegetation without exception
 - B. Allow to grow for a year
 - C. Remove surface vegetation and till the original soil to a depth of 2 inches
 - D. Plant grass to protect the soil
- 10. What causes strong odors to be associated with septic system failure?**
- A. Improper design of the septic system
 - B. Pooling sewage around the system
 - C. Regular system maintenance
 - D. Natural decomposition of waste materials

Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. D
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. D
8. B
9. C
10. B

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Explanations

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1. At what percentage full must a holding tank alarm trigger?

- A. 95%
- B. 90%
- C. 85%**
- D. 75%

The appropriate percentage at which a holding tank alarm should trigger is 85%. This threshold is established to provide enough time for the system operator to respond and take necessary actions before the tank overflows. By setting the alarm at this level, it allows for a proactive approach to waste management. A trigger point below this percentage, such as 75%, may not provide sufficient warning time, increasing the risk of an overflow situation. Conversely, a trigger point set too high, like 90% or 95%, could lead to situations where the tank is nearly full before anyone is alerted, potentially causing environmental hazards or system failures. Therefore, 85% is the optimal balance to ensure safety and proper function of the septic system.

2. What strategy can a certified installer use to accommodate a steep slope during septic system installation?

- A. Ignore slope stability
- B. Design special modifications for the site**
- C. Deeply bury all components
- D. Use smaller components only

Designing special modifications for the site is crucial for accommodating a steep slope during septic system installation. When a site has a steep slope, it can significantly affect the performance and functionality of the septic system due to issues like water runoff, erosion, and gravity-driven drainage. By implementing site-specific modifications, such as adjusting the design of the drainage field, incorporating retaining walls, or ensuring proper grading, an installer can effectively manage these challenges and ensure the system operates efficiently. Tailoring the system to the landscape helps maintain soil integrity, promotes adequate drainage, and minimizes environmental impact. This approach emphasizes the importance of adapting septic system designs to the natural features of the land rather than utilizing standard setups, which may not function correctly on a steep slope.

3. When can a certified installer request an initial inspection by a certified inspector?

- A. Only after the system installation
- B. Before completing the affidavit
- C. As soon as the system is planned
- D. Upon installation completion or affidavit issue**

A certified installer can request an initial inspection by a certified inspector upon the completion of the installation or after an affidavit has been issued. This timing is crucial because it allows the inspector to assess the completed system for compliance with regulations and standards before it becomes operational. The process typically ensures that the installation adheres to design specifications and local regulations, which is critical for the proper functioning and safety of septic systems. Inspection at this stage also helps to identify any potential issues that may not be evident once the system is buried or put into use. Requesting an inspection too early—such as when the system is still in the planning phase or before installation is complete—would not be practical, as there would be nothing to physically inspect. Thus, the right timing for this request assures that all components are in place and properly installed, facilitating a thorough evaluation.

4. What is the minimum lateral trench depth required?

- A. 12 inches
- B. 24 inches**
- C. 30 inches
- D. 36 inches

The minimum lateral trench depth required is 24 inches. This depth is established to ensure that septic systems function effectively by allowing adequate soil treatment and filtration before effluent reaches the groundwater. The 24-inch depth is a standard that helps to ensure that the trench is not too shallow, which could lead to inadequate treatment of wastewater, and not too deep, which could create issues with soil pressure and complicate installation. This standard considers various factors such as soil type, climate, and the specific design of the septic system. Maintaining the correct trench depth is crucial for the overall performance of the septic system and for protecting public health and the environment. The other depth options are either too shallow or too deep, which do not align with the regulatory requirements aimed at ensuring good septic system management.

5. Is a professional inspection required before the installation of fill soil in a septic system?

- A. Yes, always**
- B. No, it's optional
- C. Only for large projects
- D. Only if there are known issues

A professional inspection is indeed required before the installation of fill soil in a septic system because it ensures that the site conditions and soil characteristics are suitable for the system's performance. The inspection can identify factors such as soil type, drainage capacity, and any potential contamination, which are crucial for the proper functioning of the septic system. A professional can evaluate whether the proposed fill soil will not adversely affect the existing conditions, especially since fill soil can alter water flow and drainage patterns. This kind of assessment helps in preventing future system failures or environmental issues resulting from improper installation. Therefore, requiring a professional inspection is a critical step in ensuring compliance with regulations and maintaining public health and safety standards related to wastewater management.

6. Is it acceptable to substitute a percolation test for a site evaluation?

- A. Yes, always
- B. No, it is not acceptable**
- C. Yes, if there are site constraints
- D. Only in emergency situations

Substituting a percolation test for a site evaluation is not acceptable because these two assessments serve different purposes and provide different types of information critical to the proper design and installation of a septic system. A site evaluation is a comprehensive assessment that considers multiple factors, such as soil characteristics, groundwater levels, and site conditions. It is essential for determining the suitability of a location for a septic system and ensuring that the system will function properly without risking contamination of groundwater or nearby water bodies. On the other hand, a percolation test specifically measures the rate at which soil absorbs water. While this information is important, it does not provide a complete picture of the environmental conditions affecting a septic system's performance. Relying solely on the percolation test could lead to poor site selection and potential failures of the septic system, which could have serious environmental and health implications. Hence, a comprehensive site evaluation is necessary to determine the best locations and designs for septic systems, making it clear that a percolation test cannot substitute for this critical process.

7. Once a local inspector approves the system, who is liable for any repairs?

- A. The local inspector
- B. The homeowner
- C. The installing contractor
- D. No one is liable**

The situation surrounding liability for repairs after a local inspector approves a septic system is framed by the understanding of responsibilities in the installation and approval process. When a local inspector examines and approves a septic system, they are essentially assessing whether it meets local regulations and codes at that moment in time. Their role is to ensure compliance, but this does not extend to guaranteeing the future performance or maintenance of the system. Once approved, the liability for any repairs typically falls away from the inspector. Rather, it generally aligns with the parties directly involved in the ownership and maintenance of the system. In this context, if issues arise, it's often the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain the system and manage repairs, as they hold ownership of the property and its systems. The installing contractor may have certain warranties or responsibilities based on the contract terms regarding the installation but is not liable indefinitely unless specified. Because local inspectors do not have a continuing obligation after approval, claiming that "no one is liable" acknowledges the complexity surrounding these responsibilities and highlights that once the inspector has completed their duty, liability does not automatically transfer to another party. In summary, after an inspector has approved a septic system, the accountability for any subsequent repairs typically does not fall on them, resulting in the assertion that

8. What is the total design daily waste flow (TDW) for a three-bedroom home using water flush toilets?

- A. 249 TDW with 386 linear feet
- B. 330 TDW with 446 linear feet**
- C. 360 TDW with 486 linear feet
- D. 165 TDW with 223 linear feet

The total design daily waste flow (TDW) for a three-bedroom home typically takes into account several factors, including the number of bedrooms, the type of plumbing fixtures used, and specific calculations that reflect the expected daily water usage. In most scenarios, a standard estimate for TDW can be calculated based on an assumption of wastewater generation per bedroom. For homes with water flush toilets, the general standard is around 110 gallons per day per bedroom in residential settings. Therefore, for a three-bedroom home, you would multiply this daily water usage by the number of bedrooms to achieve the TDW. When performing this calculation for a three-bedroom home, 110 gallons multiplied by 3 would yield a TDW of approximately 330 gallons per day. This aligns effectively with the provided answer which indicates that 330 TDW with 446 linear feet is accurate. Linear feet usually pertains to the length of the system components, which are designed to accommodate the volume of wastewater generated. Hence, the correct answer appropriately reflects the expected daily waste flow based on standard design principles in septic system planning for a home of that size with the specified toilet type.

9. What is the appropriate corrective action for onsite vegetation prior to installing a septic system?

- A. Clear all vegetation without exception
- B. Allow to grow for a year
- C. Remove surface vegetation and till the original soil to a depth of 2 inches**
- D. Plant grass to protect the soil

The appropriate corrective action for onsite vegetation prior to installing a septic system involves removing surface vegetation and tilling the original soil to a depth of 2 inches. This step is crucial because it helps to ensure that any organic matter, which could decompose and affect the septic system's function, is adequately addressed. By removing surface vegetation, you minimize the risk of roots interfering with the septic components. Tilling the soil also helps to aerate it and can enhance drainage features, which is vital for the proper operation of the septic system. This preparation creates a more suitable environment for the installation, allowing the system to function effectively. It prevents future complications that could arise from organic materials in the topsoil, contributing to the overall longevity and efficacy of the septic system.

10. What causes strong odors to be associated with septic system failure?

- A. Improper design of the septic system
- B. Pooling sewage around the system**
- C. Regular system maintenance
- D. Natural decomposition of waste materials

Pooling sewage around the system is a primary indicator of septic system failure, and it is a significant factor that contributes to the strong odors often associated with such failures. When sewage pools, it means that waste materials are not being properly processed by the septic system. This might occur due to various reasons such as clogs, malfunctioning components, or saturation of the surrounding soil, leading to an inability of the system to adequately absorb or treat the wastewater. When this backlog of sewage occurs, it produces gases such as hydrogen sulfide, methane, and ammonia, which are responsible for the foul smells. These gases can escape into the air, further introducing strong odors around the area of the failed system. In contrast, regular maintenance of a septic system typically helps prevent these issues by ensuring that waste is appropriately treated and routed, which should minimize any associated odors. Therefore, the presence of pooled sewage is a clear sign of dysfunction and the resulting odors that arise from it.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

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We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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