

2022 Class-IV Soil Evaluation Exam Procedure

The Class-IV exam consists of two sections, the written portion and the field portion. The examinee must pass each section respectively to qualify for a Soil Evaluators license. A passing score is at least a 70%. The written portion will be scheduled first and must be passed before the field portion can be taken. The exam will be held at least once a year, the dates will be posted on the website.

Written Exam

The written portion will be held at RIDEM 235 Promenade Street, Providence RI. It includes information about the RIDEM OWTS Program, State Regulations, and general soil knowledge. The examinee will be allowed 3 hours to complete it. The exam is closed book and will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and true/false questions. No cell phone usage is allowed.

Upon completion of the exam the examinee may leave.

Examination Content

- Principles of on-site sewage treatment and disposal;
- Understanding of the applicable state regulations;
- Geology and soils of Rhode Island;
- Soil textural analysis and profile descriptions;
- Estimating mean seasonal high groundwater elevations using soil morphology; and
- Soil moisture and drainage characteristics of soils

Field Exam

If the examinee scores at least a 70% on the written portion they will be eligible to take the field exam. The exam will be held at various vacant lots across Rhode Island which will be different every year. The owner of the vacant property must sign a waiver allowing the examinee to enter their property and the examinee must sign a liability waiver in the unlikely event of an injury sustained while taking the exam. The examinee will be asked to fill out at least two soil evaluation logs which include soil information, ledge and SHWT depths. The RIDEM OWTS Inspectors will be proctoring the exam. No cell phone usage is allowed during the exam. Information on the time and location of the field exam will be provided after the written portion has been passed. For the day of the exam, the examinee will be given a neutral meeting point where they will be directed to the exam location. A maximum of 50 minutes is allowed at each pit location. Please arrive prepared and on time.

Example Pit Sequence For Larger Groups:

10 minutes in

20 minutes out

15 minutes in

5 minutes out

Cards collected at end of 5 minute interval

Required equipment for the field component

- Soil Color Book
- Clip board
- Pencils & Erasers
- Water bottle
- Towel
- Soil knife
- Any guide materials you would use in the field for soil evaluation
- Plastic bag or other method to shield your recording sheet from inclement weather
- Backpack, bucket or a bag for toting clothing and equipment
- Specimen tin to hold soil samples (disposable muffin pans work well)
- “Sharpie” marker for labeling tin
- Masking tape on which to label specimen tin

DEM will supply for use at the field component:

- Topography maps
- Cards on which to record field exam information

You will be in the field for around 3 hours, the following are suggested:

- Wear appropriate field attire (boots and jeans)
- Bring “layers” of clothing, consider a hat
- Be prepared for rain
- Consider an extra pair of shoes
- Insect repellent is recommended
- Sunscreen may be desired