

CALIFORNIA ONSITE WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION

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JACKSON, CALIFORNIA

PRICIPLES OF PLAN CHECKING

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My Background

I bring up my background to reinforce the idea that much of the “plan checking” thought process can apply to circumstances and conditions that occur every day.

- Town of Paradise
 - Plan checking (Street Improvement Plans, Building Plans and Structural Calculations, Storm Drain Improvements)
 - Land Use Reviews (Conformance with Codes, Conditions of Approval)
- Thermalito Water and Sewer District
 - Plan Checking (Water and Sewer Plans)
 - Miscellaneous Plan Check Consulting (Alternative Wastewater Systems)
- NorthStar Engineering
 - Plans, Calculations and Reports of all types
 - Miscellaneous documents, financial statements, transmittals, contracts, etc.

Who are the players?

- Designer
- Reviewer/Checker....Regulatory Approval
- Manufacturer
- Contractor/Installer
- Service Provider
- Monitoring Agency or District
- Owner (Future Owner)

Why do we “plan check”?

- To determine compliance with codes and regulations
- To maintain quality control
- To maintain consistency
- To protect public health
- To establish adequate detail
- To maintain “safety factors”

Responsibilities of the “designer”

- **COMMUNICATE!!**
 - o The plans should “CLEARLY” tell the story
 - o Communicate the needs of the Owner to everyone else
 - o Communicate the needs of everyone else to the Owner
- Alternatives analysis
- Stay within “area of expertise”
- Stay within the manufacturer’s limits
- Consider the “life cycle” of the project
- Total familiarity creates “plan blindness”...“The obvious is illusive until its brought to the threshold of human consciousness”, Dr. Timothy Winneberger (Look him up! He is one of the early founders of this industry.)

Plan Checking Tips

- Checklists, of course
- Don’t become the “designer”
- Check the physical “edges”Site Visit!
- Role Playing
- Get out the highlighter
- Avoid the tendency to find fault at all costs...Establish boundaries
- Convey the “two heads are better than one” goal