



# CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

# IN YOUR BACKYARD



*ANSI National Accreditation Board*



## CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT CASE STUDY

### INSTRUCTIONS

*The 2023 Conformity Assessment Case Study is fictional but based on real events and pertinent information. The case study contains complete information (without the need for assumptions) for only one occurrence of conformity assessment.*

*Read through the text on the following page; you will be asked to use the information in the case study to identify or describe the following for that one occurrence of conformity assessment:*

- » OBJECT(S) OF CONFORMITY
- » SPECIFIED REQUIREMENT(S)
- » BODY(IES)
- » SCHEME(S)
- » SELECTION FUNCTION ACTIVITY(IES)
- » DETERMINATION FUNCTION ACTIVITY(IES)
- » REVIEW-DECISION-ATTESTATION FUNCTION ACTIVITY(IES)
- » 1ST PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)
- » 2ND PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)
- » 3RD PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)





## CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT IN YOUR BACKYARD

Mark and Sarah Blandings were ready to start down the path to retirement. Mark had been credentialed in cybersecurity and built up his sole proprietorship business to the point it was ready to be bought out. Sarah started out as a nurse, earning a Master's and PhD degrees to lead nursing operations for a regional healthcare system, including attaining accreditation from a national association of health care providers.

They had long dreamed of moving west to the mountains, away from the city and building a new house that was just the right size, with just the right amenities for retirement. They had spent weekends exploring various areas at different times of the year to find the right location with the right mix of seclusion and community they desired. Mark and Sarah were mindful the new house would make a big difference in their quality of life, and they were determined to find a builder they could trust with their new home.

Their ideas came together when they found a series of lots being developed in Lansdale County by Lansdale View Homes. Lansdale View Homes would build the purchaser's home and was a strong brand in the tri-State area. Their advertising prominently featured their quality management system certification, and their website said they were expanding into sustainable building practices and products. This appealed to Mark and Sarah. As Mark and Sarah explored the available lots, one in particular jumped out at them.

However, in doing their homework they knew that the lots would not be serviced by the nearest

town's sewer system. Unlikely to be connected any time soon, they would need to plan for onsite wastewater treatment. They knew that meant a permit for a drainfield would be needed from the County Health Department before construction could begin. Before purchasing, Mark and Sarah wanted to make sure the lot could meet County Health Department requirements.

They proposed an agreement with Lansdale View Homes to purchase the lot; they would split the costs of any tests and inspections needed to show the lot could meet County Health Department requirements. This would not be an application for a permit from the County; just testing and inspection for their own peace of mind. Their agreement with Lansdale View Homes included explicit text that the lot needed to support a wastewater treatment system for the size house they wanted to build as a condition of sale. The agreement provided Mark and Sarah one week after receiving a report of the needed tests or inspections to terminate the purchase agreement. Lansdale View Homes added text in the agreement that if the sale was not consummated all the information about the lot would belong to Lansdale View Homes. All agreed and signed the agreement.

Mark and Sarah worked with a licensed architect to come up with some general information about the size and footprint of their home. The licensed architect sent the information to Lansdale View Homes, which they used to estimate the volume of wastewater that would need to be processed



based on County Health Department guidelines. Lansdale View Homes determined where the foundation of the house would go and the part of the lot that could be used as a potential drainfield. They shared that with Mark and Sarah who agreed on the general layout.

County regulations for drainfields required a percolation test method per the National Septic Drainfield Association Standard A3. The results of the percolation test would show the suitability of the property for onsite wastewater treatment, giving Mark and Sarah the peace of mind, they wanted. State regulations require the percolation test to be performed by a state-licensed professional engineer or a state-registered environmental health specialist. Sarah's brother-in-law was an environmental health specialist and she wanted him to perform the work. However, Lansdale View Homes preferred a local professional engineer who frequently worked with the county. Mark and Sarah agreed but wanted the contract between Lansdale View Homes and the professional engineer to explicitly state the professional engineer would provide impartial and unbiased results to all the parties. Mark and Sarah also stipulated they would be at the property when the test was conducted.

Based on Standard A3, certain weather conditions had to occur in the time leading up to the percolation test. Based on her assessment of weather conditions at the lot, the professional engineer

notified Lansdale View Homes, Mark, and Sarah a few days before the test could be performed. On the day of the test, Lansdale View Homes, Mark, Sarah, and the professional engineer all met at the property. Lansdale View Homes paced off the general footprint of the foundation, which Mark and Sarah confirmed. Lansdale View Homes then showed the professional engineer the portion of the lot for the drainfield and provided the estimated volume of wastewater that would need to be processed. The professional engineer calculated the area of the drainfield and its specific location using surveying equipment calibrated by an accredited calibration laboratory. Following the Standard A3, the professional engineer bored the test holes needed for the size of the drainfield to the required depth and completed percolation test for the lot.

The report of the test, including the results, was delivered to both Lansdale View Homes and Mark and Sarah. Mark and Sarah met with the professional engineer, and she explained how the results would meet the county requirements related to drainfields for the size house they planned. Mark and Sarah decided right then and there to buy the lot. They went straight to Lansdale View Homes; it was just across the street from the local franchise of a national fast-food chain where they had coffee with the professional engineer. They waived their right to terminate the agreement, and based on the lot meeting their requirements, purchased it for their dream house.



**YOUR ANSWER**

**THE EXPERTS' ANSWER**

**OBJECT(S) OF CONFORMITY**

The lot Mark and Sarah were interested in buying

**SPECIFIED REQUIREMENTS**

The County Health Department requirements for a drainfield specifically for the size house Mark and Sarah wanted to build

**BODY(IES)**

Mark and Sarah; the licensed architect; Lansdale View Homes; the Professional Engineer

**SCHEME(S)**

The combination of all the verbal and written agreements between Lansdale View Homes and Mark and Sarah regarding the purchase of the lot and related activities



## SELECTION FUNCTION ACTIVITY(IES)

- Mark, Sarah and the Licensed Architect developed the size and footprint of the house to be built
- The licensed architect provided the information about the house to Lansdale View Homes
- Lansdale View Homes estimated the volume of wastewater that would need to be processed
- Lansdale View Homes identified the placement of the foundation and the portion of the lot available for the drainfield and showed both to Mark and Sarah
- Mark and Sarah agreed to the general layout of the foundation and the drainfield on the lot
- Mark, Sarah and Lansdale View Homes chose the individual to perform the Percolation Test
- The Professional Engineer assessed weather conditions at the lot and notified Lansdale View Homes and Mark and Sarah of the date for the percolation test
- Lansdale View Homes paced off the portion of the lot for the house foundation
- Mark and Sarah confirmed the paced off foundation and its location
- Lansdale View Homes provided the Professional Engineer the volume of wastewater to be processed
- Lansdale View Homes showed the Professional Engineer the portion of the lot for use as a drainfield
- The Professional Engineer calculated the area of the drainfield and its specific location

## DETERMINATION FUNCTION ACTIVITY(IES)

- The Professional Engineer identified the number and depth of the holes for the Percolation Test and bored the holes
- The Professional Engineer completed the Percolation Test in accordance with National Septic Drainfield Association A3
- Lansdale View Homes witnessed the test
- Mark and Sarah witnessed the test
- The Professional Engineer provided a report of the test including the results

## REVIEW-DECISION-ATTESTATION FUNCTION ACTIVITIES

- The Professional Engineer explained the test results and how they fulfilled County Health Department requirements for a drainfield for the size house Mark and Sarah planned
- Mark and Sarah decided to buy the lot
- Mark and Sarah waived their right to terminate the agreement to purchase the lot



## 1<sup>ST</sup> PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)

- Lansdale View Homes estimated the volume of wastewater that would need to be processed
- Lansdale View Homes identified the placement of the foundation and the portion of the lot available for the drainfield and showed both to Mark and Sarah
- Lansdale View Homes collaborated in the choice of the individual to perform the Percolation Test
- Lansdale View Homes paced off the portion of the lot for the house foundation
- Lansdale View Homes provided the Professional Engineer the volume of wastewater to be processed
- Lansdale View Homes showed the Professional Engineer the portion of the lot for use as a drainfield
- Lansdale View Homes witnessed the test

**CONTINUE** 

## 2<sup>ND</sup> PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)

- Mark, Sarah and the Licensed Architect developed the size and the footprint of the house to be built
- The licensed architect provided the information about the house to Lansdale View Homes
- Mark and Sarah agreed to the general layout of the foundation and drainfield on the lot
- Mark and Sarah collaborated in the choice of the individual to perform the Percolation Test
- Mark and Sarah confirmed the paced off foundation and its location
- Mark and Sarah witnessed the test
- Mark and Sarah decided to buy the lot
- Mark and Sarah waived their right to terminate the agreement to purchase the lot



### 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY ACTIVITY(IES)

- The Professional Engineer assessed weather conditions at the lot and notified Lansdale View Homes and Mark and Sarah of the date for the Percolation test
- The Professional Engineer calculated the area of the drainfield and its specific location
- The Professional Engineer identified the number and depth of the holes for the Percolation Test and bored the holes
- The Professional Engineer completed the Percolation Test in accordance with National Septic Drainfield Association A3
- The Professional Engineer provided a report of the test including the results
- The Professional Engineer explained the test results and how they fulfilled County Health Department requirements for a drainfield for the size house Mark and Sarah planned

### EXTRA CREDIT

*The complete information for the one occurrence of conformity assessment in the Case Study specifically refers to one or more other occurrences of conformity assessment. However, complete information was not provided about this/these referenced occurrence(s). Name or describe the other occurrence(s).*

- Permitting of the lot by the County
- Licensing of Architects
- Licensing of Professional Engineers
- Registration of Environmental Health Specialists
- Calibration of surveying equipment
- Accreditation of calibration laboratory

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

## WATCH ACCOMPANYING 30-MINUTE WEBINAR



Need more information regarding Conformity Assessment?

ANAB has a [free webinar](#) about the importance of fundamental principles in general and the documents from ISO that describe them for conformity assessment.

ANAB also offers training for [The 4-3-3 Conformity Assessment Paradigm](#), understanding and applying the fundamental principles of conformity assessment.

We hope you found this case study experience beneficial!