



SINKHOLE MITIGATION POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to memorialize the Township's procedure to mitigate sinkholes that impact or have the potential to impact existing public facilities and streets; facilities and streets that are proposed to be dedicated to a public agency; or, facilities and streets that may remain private but provide a community function or benefit including, but not limited to, storm water detention basins, storm water conveyance facilities and private streets providing access to existing or proposed lots. This policy is not intended to address sinkholes associated with activities that are not directly regulated by the Township's subdivision and land development ordinance including, but not limited to, building construction.

RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for the mitigation of sinkholes rests with the developer or applicant undertaking the activity that reveals the sinkhole, regardless of the direct or indirect cause of the sinkhole. Rapho Township considers this responsibility a covenant running with the land and shall be binding upon the developer's or applicant's heirs and assigns.

NOTIFICATION

By Rapho Township - Upon knowledge of, or the observance of a sinkhole by Rapho Township, the Township will notify the developer or applicant with the responsibility for the mitigation of the sinkhole.

By Developer or Applicant - Upon knowledge of the existence of a sinkhole by the developer or applicant that is responsible for the mitigation of the sinkhole, the developer or applicant will notify Rapho Township and acknowledge responsibility for the mitigation of the sinkhole.

MITIGATION

Within three (3) business days of the knowledge or notification of the presence of a sinkhole, the developer or applicant shall engage the services of a Professional Geologist or Engineer, with experience in karst feature mitigation and licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to prepare a written plan to mitigate the sinkhole. The written plan shall contain, at a minimum, a descriptive narrative of the anticipated mitigation measure(s) including the requirement to employ all reasonable efforts to locate the throat of the sinkhole, the graphic location of the sinkhole to be mitigated and shall be signed and sealed by the registered professional. The written plan shall be submitted to Rapho Township within ten (10) business days and shall be reviewed and approved by the Rapho Township Engineer.

In the event sinkhole mitigation measures are provided or included within an approved subdivision or land development plan, the developer or applicant shall, within three (3) business days of the knowledge or notification of the presence of a sinkhole, engage the services of a Professional Geologist or Engineer, with experience in karst feature mitigation and licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to verify, in consultation with and agreement by the Rapho Township Engineer, that the sinkhole mitigation measures are provided or included within an approved subdivision or land development plan are adequate to address the specific sinkhole to be mitigated.

Acknowledging that time can be of the essence in sinkhole mitigation, the Township, at its sole discretion, may waive the requirement to have approval prior to initiating sinkhole mitigation.

Within five (5) business days of the Township Engineer's approval of the written plan or the consultation with and agreement by the Rapho Township Engineer that the sinkhole mitigation measures are provided or included within an approved subdivision or land development plan are adequate to address the specific sinkhole to be mitigated, the developer or applicant shall complete the mitigation of the sinkhole in accordance with the approved written plan or the sinkhole mitigation measures provided or included within an approved subdivision or land development plan.

Within ten (10) days following the mitigation of a sinkhole, the developer or applicant shall engage the services of a Professional Geologist or Engineer, with experience in karst feature mitigation and licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to update or revise the approved written plan to include photo-documentation of and to specify the specific mitigation measured implemented. A signed and sealed copy of the updated or revised plan shall be presented to the Township and the Township Engineer for their respective project files.

If the requirement to prepare a written plan was waived by the Township, or in the event sinkhole mitigation measures are provided or included within an approved subdivision or land development plan, the developer or applicant shall, within ten (10) days following the mitigation of a sinkhole, provide a signed and sealed copy of a written report, prepared by a Professional Geologist or Engineer, with experience in karst feature mitigation and licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that includes photo-documentation and specifies the mitigation measures implemented. A signed and sealed copy of the updated or revised report shall be presented to the Township and the Township Engineer for their respective project files.

POST-MITIGATION MONITORING

Because sinkholes, by their nature, are unpredictable, mitigation is not guaranteed. It is not unusual for sinkholes to resurface at or near the site of mitigated sinkholes. Following the mitigation of a sinkhole, the developer or applicant shall monitor the mitigated sinkhole to insure the sinkhole does not resurface. In the event a mitigated sinkhole resurfaces, the notification and mitigation procedures provided in this Policy shall be followed by the developer, applicant or their heirs and assigns.

This policy was adopted by the Rapho Township Board of Supervisors on May 21, 2009.

Lowell Fry, Chairman

Jere Swarr, Vice-Chairman

Duane Martin, Secretary