

What is a Septic System?

A septic system is an individual wastewater treatment system using the soil to treat wastewater. Any home not connected to a sanitary sewer system utilizes a septic system.

A septic system has two main parts (and sometimes a third part in-between):

1. the **septic tank** (primary treatment) often known as the “quiet zone” is where sewage is physically treated through a settling process
2. the **absorption field** (secondary treatment) is where partially treated wastewater exits the tank and is distributed. Soil in the field removes bacteria and viruses from waste.
3. a pre-treatment step may be added between the septic tank and absorption field to reduce waste strength

Sewage from the home enters the septic tank where heavier solids settle and scum rises to the surface. The wastewater between the scum and solid layer enters the absorption field and trickles down into the soil.

Is Your Septic System Failing?

Failing system signs may include:

- > Sinks & toilets slowly draining
- > Gurgling plumbing sounds
- > Plumbing backups
- > Sewage odors in house or yard
- > Wet or mushy ground above system’s absorption field
- > Greener or fast-growing grass above absorption field
- > Tests show E.coli presence in nearby streams or wells
- > Wastewater levels elevated in septic tank, distribution box or inspection port

Contact us for more information:

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Owning a Septic System



A Maintenance Guide



Septic System Care & Maintenance

Why Maintenance Matters

USE WATER WISELY

- > A waterlogged absorption field hinders a septic system's ability to treat waste.
- > Conserve water and allow for time between activities that use lots of water like running the dishwasher, washing machine or baths.

KNOW WHAT NOT TO DUMP

- > Rinsing hazardous chemicals down your drains may kill the bacteria and microorganisms that work to break down waste in your septic system.
- > Don't flush or rinse anything down the drain that will not easily break down – solids like food, fat, and grease build up in the septic tank, which affects its ability to treat waste.

ONLY PLANT GRASS OVER SYSTEM

- > Roots from other types of plants may clog the absorption field and prevent it from properly treating waste.

DON'T DRIVE OVER SYSTEM

- > Keep vehicles, heavy equipment and farm animals off absorption field. These can cause compaction in the field, which will reduce its ability to filter and treat wastewater. The only exception is your lawn mower.

PLAN FOR REGULAR PUMPING AND INSPECTIONS

- > Pumping removes solids and prevents them from clogging the absorption field.
- > Inspections catch problems earlier, lower the cost of repairs and could extend the life of the overall system.

SAVE MONEY

- > Maintain and evaluate your septic system to find small problems before they become big, expensive problems.

Average repair/replacement cost

\$3K-\$25K

Average pump/inspection cost

\$250-\$350

FAMILY HEALTH

- > Sewage contains harmful germs that can make people sick. Malfunctioning septic systems can leak raw sewage into yards or waters putting your family, pets and neighbors at risk.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

- > Keeping your system in good operating condition prevents sewage from entering drinking water sources, creeks, rivers and other recreational areas.