

**FREE  
EBOOK**

**Aquarius** SC  
THE CLEAR SOLUTION®

# SEPTIC TANK MAINTENANCE

— THE ESSENTIAL HOMEOWNER GUIDE —

Keep your system healthy,  
odour-free and operating  
at its best.

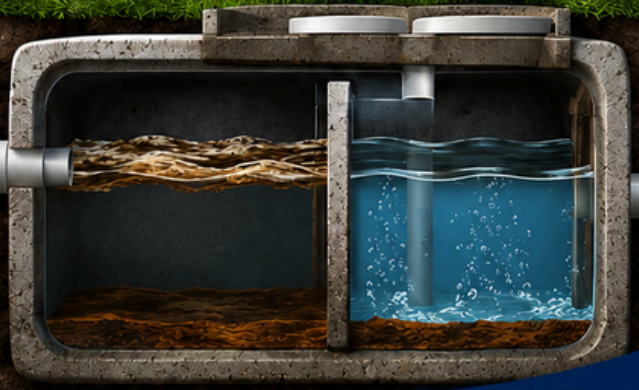


THE POWER OF



GOOD BACTERIA  
BETTER BALANCE  
BETTER RESULTS

NATURE AND SCIENCE



REDUCE ODOURS  
Naturally



IMPROVE PERFORMANCE  
Every Day



BREAK DOWN GREASE  
and Waste



SAVE MONEY  
on Pump-outs



ECO-FRIENDLY  
and Safe

HEALTHY SEPTIC. HEALTHY HOME. HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.

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# UNDERSTANDING HOW YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM WORKS

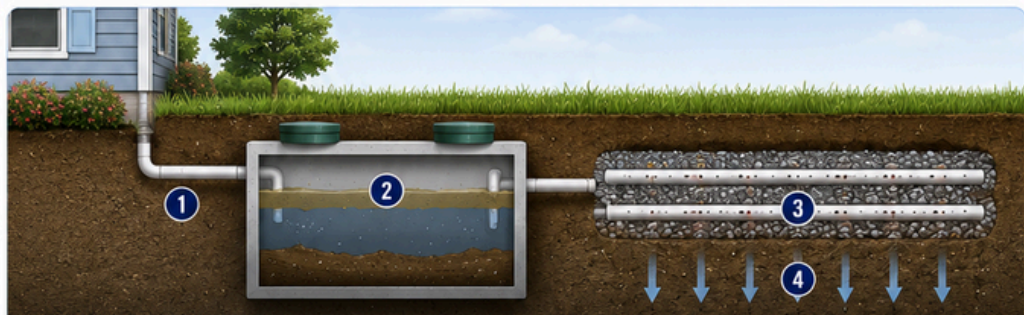


## BUILT TO WORK NATURALLY.

A septic system treats wastewater using natural processes—primarily settling, digestion by bacteria, and soil filtration.

Your septic system is a simple but highly effective treatment process that happens underground. Knowing the basics helps you maintain your system properly and protect your home, health and the environment.

### THE BIG PICTURE: WHAT HAPPENS BELOW GROUND



#### 1 WASTEWATER ENTERS

Wastewater from your home (kitchen, bathrooms, laundry) flows through the main sewer pipe into the septic tank.

#### 2 TREATMENT IN THE TANK

Solid waste settles to the bottom as sludge. Fats, oils and grease float to the top as scum. Beneficial bacteria break down organic matter in the water.

#### 3 LIQUID FLOWS TO THE DRAINFIELD

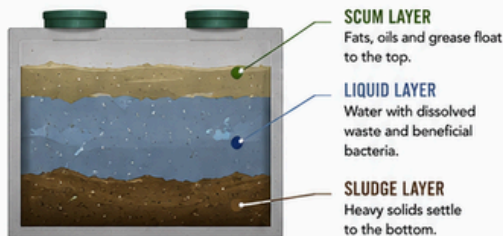
Partially treated water (effluent) exits the tank and flows into the drainfield through perforated pipes.

#### 4 NATURAL FILTRATION IN THE SOIL

Effluent slowly percolates through the soil, where natural organisms further filter and purify the water before it returns to the groundwater.

### THE SEPTIC TANK: NATURE'S SEPARATOR

Inside the tank, three layers form. Each plays an important role in the treatment process.



### DRAINFIELD: THE FINAL FILTER

The drainfield is not a holding tank. It is a soil treatment area. Keeping it healthy is essential.

- ✓ Soil acts as a natural filter.
- ✓ Grass and plants help prevent erosion.
- ✓ Never drive or build over the drainfield.
- ✓ Proper care prevents clogs and backups.



# WARNING SIGNS YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM NEEDS ATTENTION

Catching small problems early can prevent messy, expensive repairs. If you notice any of the signs below, your septic system may be struggling.

**DON'T IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS.  
ACT EARLY AND PROTECT YOUR SYSTEM.**



**EARLY ACTION  
CAN SAVE YOU  
THOUSANDS.**

Septic problems rarely happen all at once. They start small—then get worse over time.

**Watch for the signs.  
Take action early.  
Avoid major repairs.**

## 8 COMMON WARNING SIGNS

### 1 FOUL ODOURS



Unpleasant smells around drains, inside your home, or near the tank or drainfield often mean waste isn't breaking down properly.

### 2 SLOW DRAINS



Water takes longer than usual to drain from sinks, showers or toilets. This can indicate a blockage or a full tank.

### 3 STANDING WATER



Puddles or wet, soggy areas over the drainfield may mean the system is overloaded or not draining properly.

### 4 LUSH, GREEN GRASS



If the grass over your septic area is unusually green and lush compared to the rest of the yard, it could be a sign of a problem.

### 5 GURGLING SOUNDS



Gurgling noises in your pipes or toilet can mean air is trapped due to a blockage or full tank.

### 6 SEWAGE BACKUPS



Wastewater backing up into sinks, tubs, or toilets is a serious sign your system needs immediate attention.

### 7 HIGH WATER USAGE



Using more water than your system can handle (multiple loads of laundry, long showers, etc.) can overwhelm the tank.

### 8 OLDER SYSTEM



If your system is more than 20–30 years old and hasn't been inspected recently, it's at higher risk for failure.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU NOTICE A WARNING SIGN



- ✓ Reduce water use immediately.
- ✓ Avoid using drains, washing machines, dishwashers and toilets.
- ✓ Do not flush wipes, grease or other solids.
- ✓ Have your system inspected by a qualified professional.
- ✓ Act quickly—small issues can become large and costly.

## REMEMBER



Your septic system is underground, but the signs are not always hidden.

Regular attention and quick action keep your system healthy, your home safe, and your costs down.

# THE BIGGEST CAUSES OF SEPTIC TANK FAILURE

Avoid these common mistakes to protect your system.

Most septic problems are not caused by age alone—they are caused by what goes down the drain and how the system is used. Small poor habits can disrupt the natural balance in your tank and lead to costly repairs.



**KNOW BETTER,  
DO BETTER.**

A little knowledge and daily awareness go a long way in preventing septic system failure.

## 1 FLUSHING THE WRONG THINGS



Only human waste and toilet paper should go down the toilet. "Flushable" wipes and other items do not break down and can quickly clog your system.

### Why it's a problem:

These items cause blockages in your tank and pipes, leading to backups and system failure.

## 2 POURING GREASE, OILS & FATS DOWN THE DRAIN



Cooking grease may look harmless when it goes down the drain, but it cools and hardens in your pipes and tank.

### Why it's a problem:

Grease builds up and blocks pipes, reduces tank efficiency, and creates odours.

## 3 USING HARSH CHEMICALS



Bleach, drain cleaners, antibacterial soaps, and other harsh chemicals can kill the beneficial bacteria that break down waste in your tank.

### Why it's a problem:

Without good bacteria, solids don't break down properly and sludge builds up faster.

## 4 OVERLOADING WITH WATER



Too much water at once—like multiple loads of laundry, long showers, or running the dishwasher back-to-back—can overwhelm your system.

### Why it's a problem:

Extra water pushes solids into the drainfield before they are treated, which can cause clogging and system failure.

## 5 IGNORING REGULAR PUMPING & INSPECTIONS



Skipping routine pumping and inspections allows sludge and scum to build up and reduces your tank's working capacity.

### Why it's a problem:

A full tank can send solids into the drainfield and lead to backups, slow drains, and expensive repairs.

## 6 PARKING OR DRIVING OVER THE DRAINFIELD







The drainfield pipes are buried just below the surface. Heavy vehicles can crush the soil and damage the pipes.

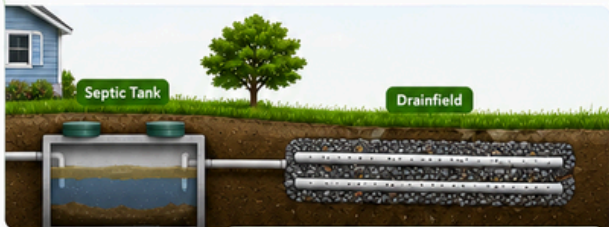
### Why it's a problem:

Compacted soil prevents proper filtration and can lead to drainfield failure.

## OTHER HABITS THAT HURT YOUR SYSTEM

-  Planting trees or large shrubs over the drainfield. Roots can invade and crack the pipes.
-  Allowing surface water to pool near the drainfield. Excess water can saturate the area.
-  Throwing food scraps, coffee grounds, or non-biodegradable items into the drain.
-  Flushing medications down the toilet or drain. They can harm bacteria and the environment.

**TIP:** When in doubt, keep it out! If you're not sure whether something is safe for your septic system, it's best to keep it out of the drain.



**GOOD HABITS TODAY =  
FEWER PROBLEMS TOMORROW**

Your septic system works hard for you every day. Treat it well, and it will protect your home for years to come.

# ESSENTIAL SEPTIC TANK MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Simple, consistent care keeps your system running efficiently for decades.

Regular maintenance doesn't have to be complicated. Follow these key steps and habits to protect your septic system, avoid problems, and extend the life of your investment.



**A LITTLE CARE  
GOES A LONG WAY.**

Routine maintenance is always more affordable than major repairs or system replacement.



## PUMP YOUR TANK REGULARLY

Have your tank pumped every 3–5 years, or as recommended by a professional, based on household size and tank size. Don't wait for problems to start.



## SCHEDULE ROUTINE INSPECTIONS

A professional inspection every 1–3 years can catch small issues early—before they become expensive repairs.



## MANAGE WATER USE WISELY

Spread out water use throughout the day. Fix leaks promptly and consider water-efficient fixtures and appliances.



## SUPPORT BENEFICIAL BACTERIA NATURALLY

Avoid harsh chemicals and antibacterial products. A healthy bacterial balance is essential for breaking down waste.



## CARE FOR YOUR DRAINFIELD

Keep the area grassy, avoid compaction, and never cover it with pavement, gravel, or landscaping structures.



## BE MINDFUL OF PLANTINGS

Keep large trees and shrubs away from the drainfield. Roots can grow into pipes and cause blockages.



## KEEP RECORDS

Keep a maintenance log of pumping, inspections, and repairs. It helps you stay on schedule and adds value to your property.



## Quick Maintenance Self-Check

- When was your tank last pumped?
- When was your last inspection?
- Are there any slow drains or gurgling pipes?
- Is the area over your drainfield green and level?
- Are you using water wisely every day?
- Do you know where your septic tank and drainfield are located?
- Have you avoided planting trees or shrubs near the drainfield?



## PROTECT YOUR SYSTEM WITH EVERYDAY HABITS



Do full loads of laundry instead of multiple small ones.



Dispose of grease in the trash, never down the drain.



Use the trash can for food scraps and non-flushable items.



Never flush medications or chemicals—take them to disposal sites.



Take shorter showers and turn off taps when not in use.



Fix leaks quickly—small drips can add up to big water waste.

# SEASONAL SEPTIC CARE GUIDE



## PLAN AHEAD. PREVENT PROBLEMS.

Use this seasonal guide to stay proactive and protect your system all year long.

Your septic system works year-round, but each season brings unique challenges. A little seasonal attention helps prevent problems and keeps everything flowing smoothly.



## WINTER

*Protect from freezing and overloading.*



Insulate exposed pipes and tank risers to prevent freezing, especially in colder regions.



Be mindful of holiday guests and increased water use.



Avoid pouring fats, oils, and grease down the drain during heavy cooking seasons.



If you have a garbage disposal, use it sparingly and run water for several seconds after.



## SPRING

*Inspect, clear, and prepare.*



Inspect the yard for soggy or soft spots that may indicate drainage issues.



Clear the drainfield area of leaves, branches, and debris.



Schedule any routine pumping or inspections before heavy summer use.



Ensure grass is growing well over the drainfield to help with natural absorption.



## SUMMER

*Manage water use and protect the drainfield.*



Spread out water use—avoid running multiple appliances at the same time.



Take shorter showers and run full loads in the washer and dishwasher.



Be careful with outdoor cooking grease—never pour it down the drain.



Keep heavy vehicles and outdoor structures off the drainfield area.



## FALL

*Prepare for colder months ahead.*



Remove fallen leaves and debris from the drainfield area.



Check that risers and lids are secure and properly sealed.



Direct roof and surface runoff away from the drainfield.



Plan ahead for winter by ensuring your system is in good condition.



## WHY SEASONAL CARE MATTERS

Weather, plants, water use, and seasonal activities all impact your septic system. A few simple steps each season can prevent costly repairs and extend the life of your system for years to come.



# MYTHS & MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT SEPTIC SYSTEMS



**THE TRUTH  
PROTECTS YOUR  
INVESTMENT.**

Knowing the facts helps you make smart choices and keep your system working properly.

There's a lot of incorrect information out there. Believing these myths can lead to costly mistakes and damage your system.



**MYTH:**

"Flushable" wipes are safe for septic systems.



**TRUTH:**

Even "flushable" wipes don't break down like toilet paper. They can clog pipes, cause backups, and damage your system.



**MYTH:**

Pouring grease down the drain is no big deal.



**TRUTH:**

Grease cools and solidifies in pipes and the tank, leading to clogs and reduced efficiency.



**MYTH:**

Chemical drain cleaners help keep my system clean.



**TRUTH:**

Harsh chemicals kill the beneficial bacteria your system needs to break down waste, causing more harm than good.



**MYTH:**

If it drains, it's fine for my septic system.



**TRUTH:**

Many things that drain away can build up in your tank, clog pipes, or harm the bacteria—causing expensive problems.



**MYTH:**

Septic systems don't need regular maintenance.



**TRUTH:**

Routine pumping and inspections prevent failures, extend the life of your system, and save you money in the long run.



## FACTS TO REMEMBER

- ✓ Your septic system relies on a delicate balance of water, bacteria, and time.
- ✓ What goes down the drain affects the entire system.
- ✓ Small habits today prevent big problems tomorrow.
- ✓ When in doubt, choose options that protect your system—not harm it.



# FINAL SUMMARY & HELPFUL RESOURCES



Your septic system works hard every day to keep your home safe and comfortable. With the right care, it can last for decades. Use the key takeaways and checklists below as your quick reference for year-round protection.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



Your septic system treats wastewater naturally—bacteria do the heavy lifting.



Small signs today can prevent big and expensive problems tomorrow.



What goes down the drain, how you use water, and routine care all matter.



Regular pumping and inspections are essential—don't skip them.



Protect your drainfield—keep it clear, compacted, and root-free.



Good habits are your best defense against septic system failure.

## ANNUAL SEPTIC CARE CHECKLIST



Have your septic tank pumped every 3–5 years (or as recommended).



Schedule an inspection every 1–3 years.



Check for and fix any leaks or running toilets.



Use water wisely and spread out heavy usage.



Avoid putting fats, oils, chemicals, and non-flushable items down the drain.



Keep the drainfield area clear and protected.



Be aware of warning signs and act early.



Keep records of pumping and inspections.



*A little attention each year can add years to the life of your system.*



## WARNING SIGNS REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

- Sewage backups in drains or toilets
- Strong odors around the tank or yard
- Standing water or soggy areas
- Gurgling noises in plumbing
- Lush, unusually green grass over the drainfield



## IF YOU NOTICE THESE SIGNS:

Reduce water use immediately and contact a qualified septic professional.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES



### Local Septic Professionals

Find certified inspectors and pumpers in your area through local listings or health department resources.



### Homeowner Education

Visit your local health department or environmental agency website for guides and tips.



### Learn More Online

Trustworthy resources and ongoing education help you make informed decisions for your home.



## A HEALTHY SEPTIC SYSTEM = A HEALTHY HOME

Take care of your system today, and it will take care of you for years to come. Thank you for investing in the health of your home and environment.

