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Environmental Health**

Septic System Permitting

Septic System Inspections

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Lodging Inspections / Permitting

Child Care Facility Inspections

Pool Inspections / Permitting

Nursing Home Inspections

Vector Assistance

School Building Inspections



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A Homeowner's Guide to a Septic System



Union County Environmental Health

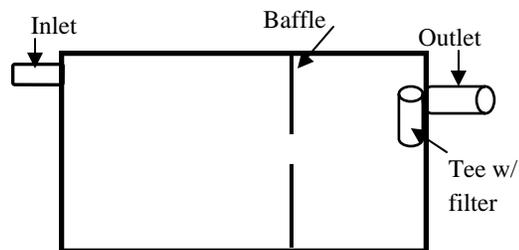
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What is a System System?

A septic system is designed to help eliminate wastewater generated inside of a house. A septic system begins at the pipe from the house, flows into a septic tank, then to a drainfield, and finally into the soil for treatment. Most of the contaminants are removed in the soil, before the water reaches the groundwater.

Septic Tank:

The septic tank is designed with two compartments, one side to hold the scum and sludge layer and the other side to hold more of the liquid waste. There may or may not be an effluent filter located at the outlet tee to prevent solids from traveling into the drainfield. Also, some septic systems may be designed with a pump tank, if gravity flow cannot be achieved to the drainfield area.



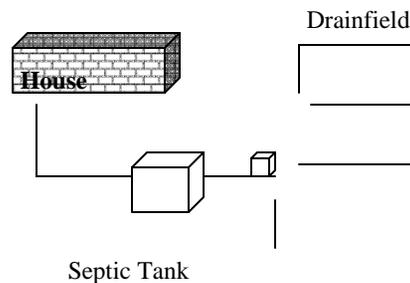
Drainfield:

The drainfield is the dosing part of the septic system. There are several drain lines that are laid out over an area and water is distributed throughout, in an even manner. The water then leaves the drainlines, flows through the aggregate, (if applicable), and then through the soil for treatment.

The system is designed for a specific amount of water based on the number of bedrooms in the house. The following table shows what gallons per day (GPD) we use for private homes:

# of Bedrooms	GPD
2	240
3	360
4	480
5	600

The Gallons per day (GPD) stated above is the maximum amount of water the system is designed to handle per day, but we recommend only using 70% of that total amount each day. By using more water than designed, the soil becomes saturated, causing sewage to backup into the house or to surface at the drainfield.



How Can I Protect My System?

The following are recommendations for your septic system:

1. Conserve water as much as possible, by eliminating any unnecessary constant flow of water
2. Use low flow fixtures in house
3. Make sure none of your plumbing fixtures are leaking.
4. Spread out laundry and dishwashing throughout the week, not all in one day.
5. Do not put any grease, cat litter, sanitary napkins, or non-degradable items down drains
6. Do not plumb water treatment systems into your septic system.
7. Divert any gutters or foundation drains away from septic tank and drainfield area.
8. Never install an irrigation system within 10 feet of the septic tank, drainfield, or repair areas.
9. Protect all parts of septic system by eliminating any driving, paving, building, or parking over system.
10. Keep shrubs and large trees away from septic area as possible to prevent roots from growing into system.
11. Maintain soil cover, preferably grass over system.
12. Pump out septic tank and pump tank, if applicable, at least every 3—4 years. Remember, to pump both sides of a septic tank to eliminate all scum and sludge accumulated inside tank.