

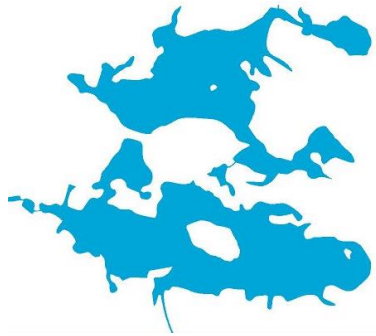
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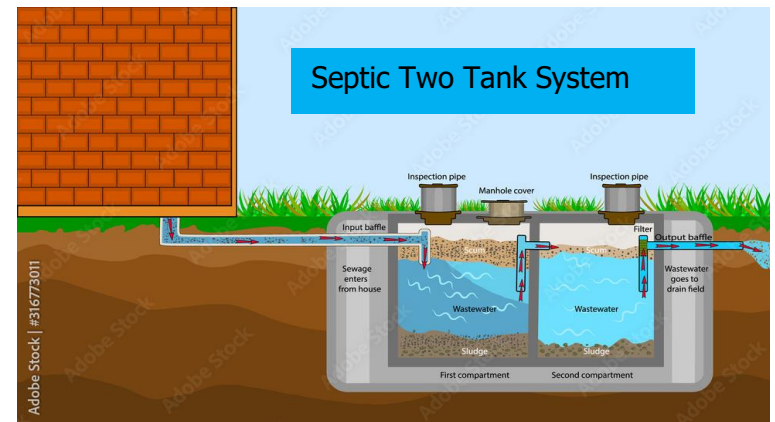
Love
Our
Lakes

Pump Your Septic

Septic Systems Best Management Practices



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LAKE LEANN PROPERTY OWNERS
ASSOCIATION

APRIL 2023

Purpose

*Due to a New Pending Bill in the Michigan House, which proposes mandatory septic system pumping and repairs we are providing you with some basic information about Septic System Maintenance as provided by the local **Health Department** and the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** and other additional information.*

Contents

Michigan House Pending Legislation, Bill #6101

How to Care for Your Septic System: (Source EPA Handout)

Why Maintain your Septic System: (Source EPA Handout)

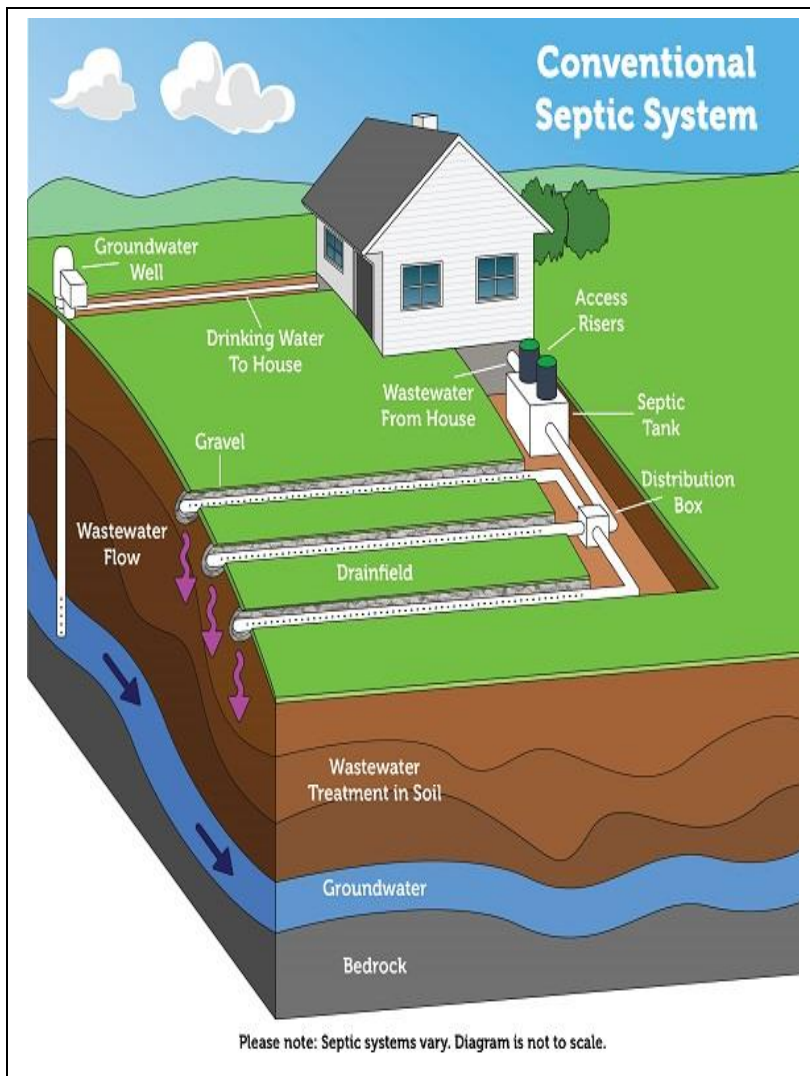
Septic System Impacts on Water Sources: (Source EPA Handout)

Industry Hillsdale County Health Department recommendations and industry guidelines

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- . **Michigan House Pending Legislation, Bill #6101, will require that septic systems are inspected before the sale of a home and that any deficiencies are repaired prior to closing.**
- . **The Branch-Hillsdale-St Joseph Community Health Agency recommend that Homeowners have their septic systems pumped and inspected every 3 - 5 years.**
- . **The Septic Service providers industry guidelines recommends that septic tanks are inspected every 3 years.**

ABOUT SEPTIC BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Septic System Impacts on Water Sources

- a. Septic Systems may impact local drinking, water wells or surface water bodies.
- b. Excessive nutrients within inland surface waters increases algal growth and lowers the dissolved oxygen levels.
- c. If septic system is not working properly, it can contaminate nearby water bodies.
- d. Surface waters can be contaminated with pathogens, such as e.coli, chemicals, and nutrients including nitrogen and phosphorus.
- e. Excess nutrients can cause an overgrowth of blue-green algae or cyanobacteria in a short period of time, triggering algae blooms.
- f. The overgrowth of algae consumes oxygen and blocks sunlight from underwater plants.
- g. When the algae eventually die, the oxygen in the water is consumed. This can cause fish and other aquatic organisms to die and create regional "dead zones."
- h. Freshwater rivers, lakes and ponds are sensitive to phosphorus contamination from failing septic systems.

How to Care for Your Septic System

- a. **Pump and Inspect Frequently** - A typical septic system should be pumped as recommended by a licensed service provider or as required by your town, county, or state. (Our local service providers Tri County and Shelar's will not even attempt to inspect without pumping the tank first.)
(Source: Home Buyer's Guide)

Generally, you can plan to have the tank pumped approximately every 3- to 5 years. Just like changing the oil in your car, preventive septic system maintenance will extend the life of your system for a small cost compared to the cost of replacing the system.
- b. **Use Water Efficiently** – Consider changing to high-efficiency toilets, showerheads and aerators. Wash small loads in the small load setting or run only full loads of laundry.
- c. **Properly dispose of Waste** – As rule of thumb do not flush anything besides human waste and toilet paper. Do not pour chemicals (ex. bleach) or toxins into toilets or drains; doing so can kill the organisms (good bacteria) in your tank and harm your system.
- d. **Maintain your Drainfield area** – Do not park or drive on drainfields, plant trees an appropriate distance from drainfield, keep roof drains, sump pumps and other drainage away from the drainfield.

Why Maintain your Septic System?

- a. Regular septic system maintenance fees of \$250 or more every **3-5 years** is a bargain compared to the cost of repairing or replacing a system.
- b. Malfunctioning septic systems release bacteria, viruses, and chemicals toxic to local waterways.
- c. When these pollutants are released into the ground, they eventually enter streams, rivers, and lakes.
- d. The frequency of pumping the septic tank depends on the tank size, number of people in the household, habits of water use as well as the amount of solids accumulated in the tank.
- e. Spring is a great time to service your septic system.
- f. Typically, a septic tank made of concrete may last 50 years or more, although older tanks may not be as well constructed as newer tanks.
- g. If your drainfield is more than 25 to 30 years old, the natural biomat that forms in the bottom of the trenches or beds can thicken and reduce the ability of the drainfield to properly discharge wastewater into the ground.
- h. If your septic system is more than 25 to 30 years old, start planning for an upgrade. It is likely your system is close to its useful lifespan.
- i. The best way to extend the life of your system is through proper maintenance.

