

Why is it important to maintain your septic system?

It saves you money.

Malfunctioning systems may cost upwards of \$3,000-\$7,000 to repair or replace compared to maintenance costs of about \$250-\$500 every 3 to 5 years. *Estimates from US EPA*

It protects the value of your home.

Malfunctioning septic systems may reduce property values and hamper the sale of your home.

It keeps your water clean and safe.

A properly maintained system helps keep your drinking water clean and reduces the risk of contaminating local and regional waters.

Working together to protect our community's water resources



City of Springfield
Phone: 541-726-3694
www.springfield-or.gov



Springfield Utility Board
Phone: 541-726-2396
www.subutil.com



Rainbow Water District
Phone: 541-746-1676
www.rwdonline.net

For more information about septic systems, please contact:

DEQ's Onsite Wastewater Mangement Program
Phone: 541-686-7905
www.deq.state.or.us/wq/onsite/onsite.htm

Lane County Land Management Division
Phone: 541-682-3754
www.lanecounty.org/departments/pw/lmd/sanitation/pages/default.aspx

Information in this brochure comes from EPA, Oregon DEQ, and OSU Extension Service sources.

A Homeowner's Guide to Septic System Maintenance



Maintaining your septic system can help you avoid costly repairs and helps keep our water clean.

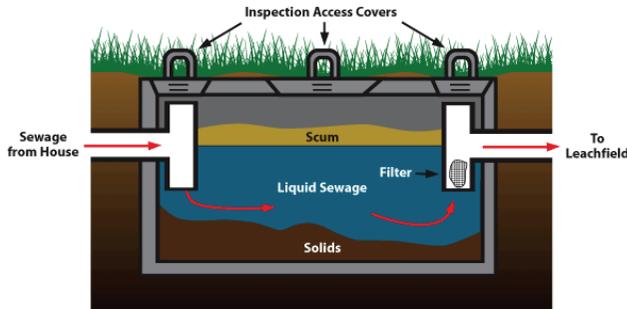
Did you know that 90% of Springfield's drinking water comes from groundwater?



By regularly maintaining your septic system, you can help prevent pollution of both our drinking water supply and our waterways.

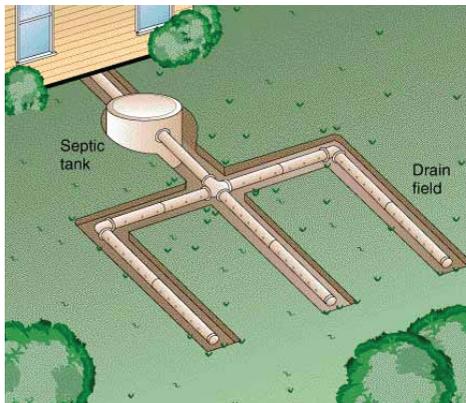
How a septic system works

The solid material in sewage settles out in the tank and is stored there until it is pumped. The effluent (liquid) passes from the tank to the drainfield where it is absorbed into the ground and treated by soil organisms.



Locating your drainfield

- Check property purchase records for an as-built drawing.
- Get a copy of the permit from Lane County.
- Probe with metal poker for tank/drainfield.
- Look for drainfield (look for a slight depression or mounding of the ground, stripes in the lawn, or differences in vegetation).
- Contact the Lane County Sanitarian or septic professional for help.



Recommended Septic System Maintenance

- Have your tank pumped out about every 3-5 years by a DEQ-licensed pumper. See Pumping Frequency Table. You can find licensed pumpers in the phone book or online.
- Have the tank inspected about every 3 years for function and sludge accumulation.
- Conserve water. Your tank will need to be pumped out less frequently!
- Avoid using a garbage disposal.
- Don't flush anything but toilet paper.
- Avoid using harsh chemicals. These can kill the beneficial "bugs" that treat the wastewater.
- Know the location of the tank and drainfield. Keep records.
- Cover the drainfield with grass to prevent erosion.
- Don't drive, build, or pave over the drainfield.

Watch for signs of tank failure - including wetness or pooling over the drainfield, backup of sewage inside the house, and/or odors.

Practice Proper Disposal!

Chemicals that go down your drain could end up in drinking water wells.

Pumping Frequency Table

How often your tank needs to be pumped depends on the size of the tank and the number of people using it. **Regular maintenance is the key to preventing failure and costly repairs.**

| Tank (Gallons) | Household Size | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 1 person | 2 people | 3 people | 4 people | 5 people | 6 people |
| 1000 | 6 yrs | 6 yrs | 4 yrs | 3 yrs | 2 yrs | 2 yrs |
| 1250 | 8 yrs | 8 yrs | 5 yrs | 3 yrs | 3 yrs | 3 yrs |
| 1500 | 9 yrs | 9 yrs | 6 yrs | 4 yrs | 3 yrs | 3 yrs |

Note: Pumping frequencies are approximate. Have your tank inspected by a certified inspector if you are not sure if it needs to be pumped. More frequent pumping may be needed if a garbage disposal is used or if your tank experiences heavy use.

Source: Treat it Right (LCOG)