Homeowner's Onsite System Guide and Record Keeping Folder

We recommend using this folder to keep all of the information on your septic system including your permit, site drawings, descriptions of maintenance and repairs performed, and other important documents. This folder also provides you with essential information and guidelines for operation and maintenance of your system. By carefully reading and following these guidelines, you will have many years of trouble-free service, while at the same time help protect our environment.

System Permit:

Issued to:	ssued to:	
Address:		
Legal Description: _		
System Description	n:	
Septic Tank Size (gallons):		Number of Compartments:
Pump Tank or Compa	artment Size (gallons):	
Advanced Treatment	Device: 🗆 Yes 🗆 No Brand:	
System Accessories:	\Box Outlet Filter \Box Pump	\Box Siphon
	\Box Diversion Valve \Box Diversion H	Box 🗆 Alarm Panel
	□ Other	
Dispersal Method:	\Box Trenches \Box Chambers	□ Bed
•	🗆 Drip Irrigation 🗆 Spray Irrigati	on 🗆 Mound
	□ Lagoon □ Discharge to	lake/river
	□ Other	
Dispersal Field Dimer	nsions:	
Installation Contrac	ctor:	
Address:		
Telephone:		
Service Provider:		
Address:		
Telephone:		Service Contract: \Box Yes \Box No
Pumper:		
Address:		
Telephone:		Service Contract: \Box Yes \Box No



Your Onsite Wastewater Treatment System

A Guide to Your Septic System

You are the owner (and operator!) of an onsite wastewater treatment system that is designed to be environmentally safe and to protect public health. A properly installed and operated system treats wastewater from your home and returns it to the groundwater to enhance and protect our groundwater resources. Successfully used for over 100 years, nearly one-third of the United States population uses this method of wastewater treatment.

System Description

The first component in the system is a septic tank that uses natural processes to treat the wastewater generated in your home. The second component is a drainfield or leachfield that recycles the treated materials. The system accepts both "blackwater" (toilet wastes) and "greywater" (wastes from the kitchen sink, bath and showers, laundry, etc). Water that should not be discharged to the system includes water from foundation or footing drains, roof gutters and other "clear" water.



The Septic Tank

The septic tank provides the first step in treatment. Its primary purpose is to protect the drainfield or other system components from becoming clogged by solids that are suspended in the wastewater. The wastewater discharged from the home goes directly into the tank where it is retained for a day or more. During the time it is in the tank, the heavier solids settle to the bottom to form a sludge layer. The lighter solids, greases and oils float to the top to form a scum layer.

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Plumbing vent

Typical Septic System



In addition to acting as a sedimentation chamber and providing storage for the sludge and scum, the septic tank also digests or breaks down the waste solids. Micro-organisms that thrive without oxygen feed on the solids to reduce the volume of sludge and scum. In the process, carbon dioxide, hydrogen sulfide and other gases are produced which must be vented from the tank through the plumbing vent on the roof.

Only about 40% of the sludge and scum volume can be reduced in this manner, so the tank must be pumped regularly to remove the accumulated solids. If not done, the tank will fill with sludge and the solids will be washed out into the drainfield where they will quickly clog the soil.

In need of assistance? Have a question? Go to www.SepticLocator.com!



The Drainfield

The drainfield provides final treatment of the wastewater and releases the treated water into the groundwater recharge. The drainfield is typically built as a series of trenches or as one larger bed, and is usually one to three feet below ground level. The drainfield must be constructed in permeable soils, have a level bottom, and be two or more feet above the groundwater table. While there are many types of drainfield systems such as aerobic, lagoon, sand filters or gravelless chamber technology, we will describe here a typical gravel and pipe system.

The excavated trench or bed is filled with six to twelve inches of gravel. The gravel exposes a soil infiltrative surface and provides storage for the wastewater. A perforated pipe is laid over the gravel to distribute the partially treated liquid, called effluent, from the septic tank over the bottom of the drainfield. The gravel and pipe are covered with synthetic fabric to help keep soil particles out of the system and the area is backfilled with soil to cover the system.

The septic tank effluent is allowed to flow to the drainfield by gravity or is dosed by pump or siphon. The effluent enters the soil and is treated as it percolates to the groundwater. The soil acts as biological filter to remove nearly all harmful substances including disease-causing bacteria and viruses, toxic organics and other undesirable wastewater constituents remaining in the septic tank effluent.

Drainfields other than those described above can be used including at-grades, mounds and drip distribution. There are also substitute medias that can be used in place of the gravel. If you have any of these, check with your local installer or contact NOWRA for more information.

Taking Care of Your Onsite System

Your onsite treatment system represents a significant investment which you will want to protect. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" was never more true than it is with onsite system care. With proper operation and regular maintenance, your system will function better and last longer. Committing a little attention to the care of your system is the best way to avoid the problem of a failing system. Read and follow the **Dos** and **Don'ts** for trouble-free operation.

<u>D0</u>

- ✓ Conserve water to reduce the amount of wastewater that must be treated and disposed.
- ✓ Repair any leaking faucets and toilets.
- ✓ Only discharge biodegradable wastes into system.
- ✓ Restrict garbage disposal use.
- ✓ Divert down spouts and other surface water away from your drainfield
- Keep your septic tank cover accessible for tank inspections and pumping.
- ✓ Have your septic tank pumped regularly and checked for leaks and cracks.
- ✓ Call a professional when you have problems.
- ✓ Compost your garbage or put it in the trash.

System Maintenance Record

Date	Description

Sketch System Layout Here



DON'T

- Flush sanitary napkins, tampons, disposable diapers, condoms, wipes, cat litter and such products into your system.
- ✗ Dump solvents, oils, paints, thinners, disinfectants, pesticides or poisons down the drain which can disrupt the treatment process and contaminate groundwater.
- X Dig in your drainfield or build anything over it.
- ✗ Plant anything over your drainfield except grass. ▮
- Drive over your drainfield or compact the soil in any way.

SAFETY FIRST!

- ✗ NEVER physically enter a septic tank or other parts of the treatment system. Call your service provider!
- Keep access areas locked at all times to prevent unauthorized entry.

For additional information and to locate a service provider in your area, go to www.SepticLocator.com.

