

## ***DOWRA's Website:***

[www.dowra.org](http://www.dowra.org)

DOWRA's website provides an endless amount of information pertaining to the onsite wastewater disposal industry. Some of the information that can be attained on our site is:

- A link to the **Septic Locator** which **provides contact information to local onsite professionals** that perform soils evaluations, septic designs, septic installations, septic inspections, and septic pump outs.
- Education Tools such as presentation power point slides
- NOWRA's Homeowners Guide and Record Keeping Book
- A link to DNREC's Simply Septic, A guide for homeowners about onsite systems
- Current board and member contact information
- Present and Past Newsletters with great onsite information
- Calendar of events with dates, locations, and sign up information
- Information to attendees, exhibitors, and presenters for DOWRA's Annual Conference
- Membership information such as member contact information and how to become a member

## **Mission Statement**

To provide leadership and promote the on-site wastewater treatment and recycling industry through education, training, communication and provide quality tools to support excellence in the performance.

## **Vision**

DOWRA will be the preeminent organization working to achieve sustainable development through effective performance of on-site wastewater systems.

**For more information, educational materials, or to find an on-site wastewater professional check out our website**



P.O. Box 1696  
Dover, DE 19901

[www.dowra.org](http://www.dowra.org)

*Proud Member Of*



[www.nowra.org](http://www.nowra.org)

# **Information About Onsite Wastewater Disposal Systems**



[www.dowra.org](http://www.dowra.org)

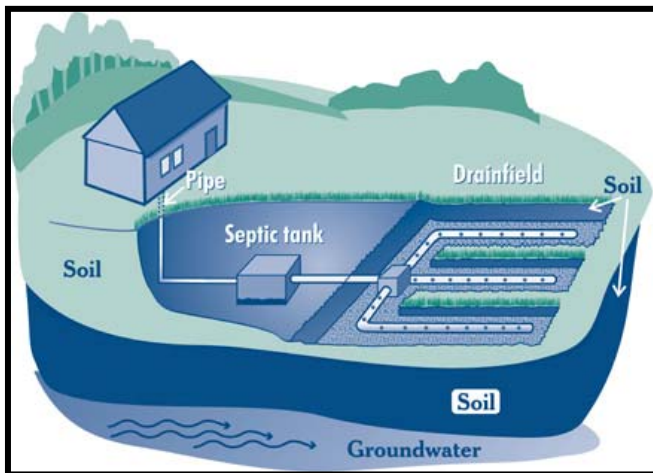
## How An On-Site Wastewater Disposal System Works:

An on-site wastewater disposal system is commonly made up of a septic tank, distribution box or pump tank, and a disposal field.

Wastewater exits the dwelling and enters into the septic tank. In the septic tank solids settle to the bottom; grease, and other scummy substances float to the top.

Bacteria within the septic tank help break down the solids within the septic tank. Approximately 95% of the solids are turned into liquid by the bacteria. The septic tank may also have an effluent filter. This filter provides extra protection to reduce the amount of solids leaving the septic tank.

The effluent (septic tank water) then flows into a distribution box or into a pump tank. The distribution box or dosing tank then distributes effluent into an underground drain field (stone bed or to multiple underground stone trenches). The drain field is made of stone and pipe to allow the water to be spread over a large area. This allows the water to slowly seep into the ground where bacteria and other organism clean and treat the water before it reaches the ground water.



## Maintenance of your On-site Wastewater Disposal System

It is the owners responsibility to maintain their disposal system. The disposal system is an important part of a home just like a roof or a heater. If it is broken the house will not function as intended.

According to DNREC\* the property owner must have their septic tank pumped every three years. The pump out is to help prevent solids from exiting the tank which can clog the disposal field and cause a system failure. A State Licensed Class F septic waste hauler may pump your septic tank. The effluent filter should also be cleaned at this time. However, the effluent filter may need to be cleaned more frequently, generally once a year, depending on the households water use.

It is recommended that a disposal system inspection be performed at the same time the septic tank is pumped. A septic inspection must be performed by a State Licensed Class H inspector. The inspection will include an evaluation of the septic tank, and the distribution box or pump tank, any pumps or controls present, and the drain field. Having an inspection performed can help prevent costly system failures by finding leaking pipes, tanks, seals, and can potentially identify a stressed system prior to system failure.

Innovative and Alternative wastewater disposal systems are required by DNREC\* to have an Operation and Maintenance Contract by a State Licensed Service Provider.

## Common Do Not's of your On-site Wastewater Disposal System

### Don'ts:

- Do not drive over your disposal system
- Do not discharge water softeners into the disposal system
- Do not divert gutters or storm water onto or near your disposal system
- Do not flush any harmful chemicals or non decomposable materials down the house drains

\*DNREC-Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control



## Procedures to Obtain a Permit to Construct an On-Site Wastewater Disposal System

**Step 1:** A soils site evaluation report must be performed by a Class D Site Evaluator. This report will determine the site and soils restriction to determine what type of system and what sizing parameters will be required. These determinations are based upon DNREC\* regulations. Once approved by DNREC\* soils site evaluations are good for a period of 5 years.

**Step 2:** Once the site evaluation has been approved a septic system design must be performed by a Class B or Class C designer. Class B designers design standard wastewater disposal systems. Class C designers design engineered, pressurized, and innovative and alternative disposal systems. The designer will size and place the disposal system based upon the number of bedrooms, site conditions, and the soils information. Once the design has been reviewed and approved by DNREC\* a permit to construct will be issued. This permit is good for a period of 2 years.

**Step 3:** The installation and construction of your on-site wastewater may be performed once a permit has been issued. The installation construction must be performed by a Class E Installer. Innovative and Alternative disposal systems may required a manufacture trained installer to perform the installation construction.

**Step 4:** Maintain your onsite wastewater disposal system by cleaning you septic tank effluent filter; by having your septic tank pumped every three years; by having your septic system inspected for breaks, leaks, and stress; and caring for your system like you would your roof, heater, AC, hot water heater, and every other essential part of you house.

Onsite wastewater professionals including: site evaluators, designers, installers, pumpers, and inspectors can be found by using the Septic Locator Link at our website [www.dowra.org](http://www.dowra.org)