

**Have a plan for your septic system.**

Prior to the design and installation of your system, consider these points:

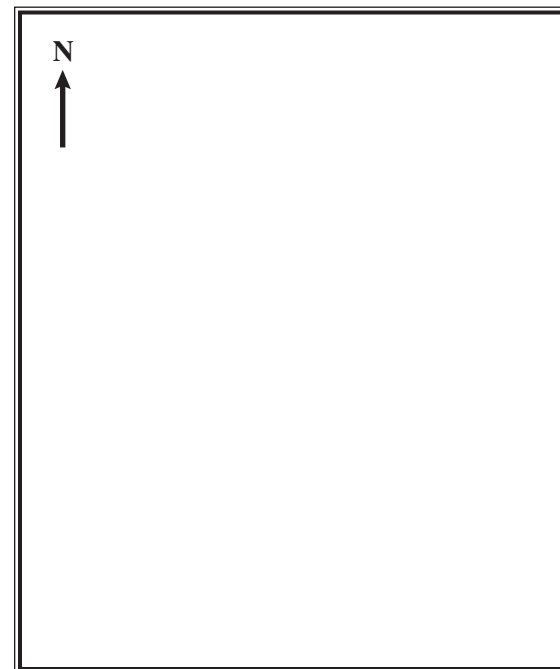
**IMPORTANT:** Provide convenient access for cleaning and repairs to the system. Both long distances and elevation differences are problems.

- Locate the system to allow for future decks, landscaping, home additions, pools, etc.
- Locate the systems where it cannot endanger the water supply system.
- Do not drive over the tank or system.
- If the tank or piping is built under an area crossed by sidewalks, paths, dog pens, etc., it must be insulated to prevent freezing.
- The dispersal system (seepage **bend**) must be able to absorb the liquid wastes in all seasons.
- Do not plant trees near your system.
- Any exposed manhole cover must have an effective locking device, warning label, and be 4" above grade (top of riser). It is the property owner's responsibility to keep the covers secure.

**Prior to cleaning, it is suggested that:**

- The manholes are uncovered but not removed (very dangerous).
- A water hose is available.
- Children and pets are supervised.

Make cleaning and maintenance of your septic system easy. Draw a picture of your system showing its location in relation to your home, as well as the location of the tank manholes and the piping and leaching system.



**“Septic systems are affordable, easy to maintain and environmentally-friendly. Maintaining a properly-cared-for septic system will include pumping and cleaning. When compared to city or municipal sewers, septic systems are extremely affordable. Please note that pumping fees might reflect external factors, such as disposal costs, that are not in control of the pumpers.”**

| TANK INSPECTION AND PUMPING RECORD                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------|
| TANK ENTRY WITHOUT PROPER TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT CAN BE FATAL. |  |  |  |  |  |  | DATE                |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | CONTRACTOR          |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | NEXT SERVICE DUE    |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | DESCRIPTION OF WORK |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                     |

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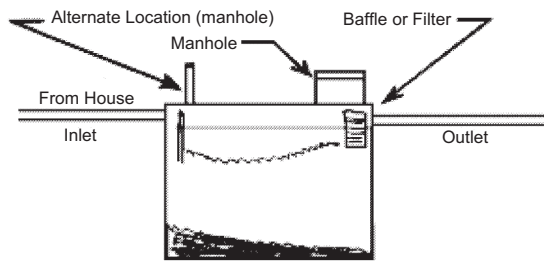
# FACTS ABOUT YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM



The Wisconsin Liquid Waste Carriers Association, Inc. has prepared this brochure to help you prevent septic system problems.

If you own a septic system, protect your investment in your home. Take a few minutes now to learn about the location, operation and maintenance of your septic system.

## Protect Your Investment



If your septic system has ever overflowed or clogged, you realize the importance of maintaining a waste disposal system properly. A malfunctioning septic system is not just unpleasant, it is also dangerous and expensive.

The following information will help you to understand your system and prevent problems.

The above sketch shows a single septic tank. Your system may consist of one, two or more septic tanks, possibly followed by a lift pump tank. All of the tanks should be cleaned during routine maintenance. The cleaning must be done through the manhole cover (approx. 24" diameter) and not through the small inspection pipes.

If your septic system was installed after mid-year 2000, you will have a filter device in place of a conventional outlet baffle. This filter should be checked approximately three to six months after your system is installed and a cleaning schedule should be developed based on your household size and/or usage. Filters may also be located in the pump chamber or in line outside the septic tank.

**DANGER: Septic Tanks Must Not Be Entered Without Proper Equipment and Training**

During the servicing of your septic system the waste from the tank will be removed, after which it may be taken to a municipal or private waste treatment facility, or it might be land applied if done in accordance with DNR rules (NR 113).

### How Does a Septic System Work?

The purpose of a septic tank is to treat household wastes: body wastes, kitchen waste, laundry and bath water. The minimal use of bleaches, detergents and soaps do not harm the system.

As waste enters the tank, solids settle to the bottom, where naturally occurring bacterial processes reduce the solids.

Liquid wastes and scum rise to the top of the tank, where a baffle or outlet filter retains the scum. Liquids flow to the distribution system and then are absorbed and treated by the soil.

To operate properly, a septic tank must be designed and constructed to suit the individual needs of the homeowner. The homeowner must anticipate the number of household occupants and install a system of appropriate size and design in accordance with local and state plumbing codes. The tank must be watertight.

If the tank is too small to accommodate the waste received in a given time it will overload—forcing solids from the tank into the drainfield.

Solids may clog the drainfield, blocking the flow of liquid to the soil. The result? Odor, sewer back-ups, malfunctions, and expense.

## Septic System Care

Have your system cleaned and checked on a regular basis, generally every two to three years, and more often if you have a large family, and/or use a garbage disposal. (Garbage disposal is not recommended.)

### Do Not Put the Following Items Down your Drains or Toilet:

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Cat Litter         | Dental Floss    |
| Treated Towelettes | Q-Tips          |
| Egg Shells         | Cigarette Butts |
| Cooking Grease     | Facial Tissue   |
| Sanitary Products  | Chemicals       |
| Disposable Diapers | Paints          |

*If you have questions about septic tank additives talk to your service provider.*

### Common questions about septic systems:

#### How do I know if I'm having a problem?

- Wet spots over the seepage area or septic tank
- Odor in the home
- Finding the toilet empty of water
- Gurgling drains
- Puddle or ring around the basement floor drains
- High water alarm (lift pump system)

#### How do I maximize the life of my system?

- Conserve water, and repair leaky faucets and toilets
- Spread laundry out over the week, but always load the washer completely
- Install water-conserving fixtures
- Divert rainwater runoff away from manhole covers and seepage area
- Do not have or use a garbage disposal

## SEVERAL TYPES OF SYSTEMS

Ask your service provider which of these are similar to your system.

