

Septic Maintenance Program





Overview of Topics

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Background

LEGISLATION

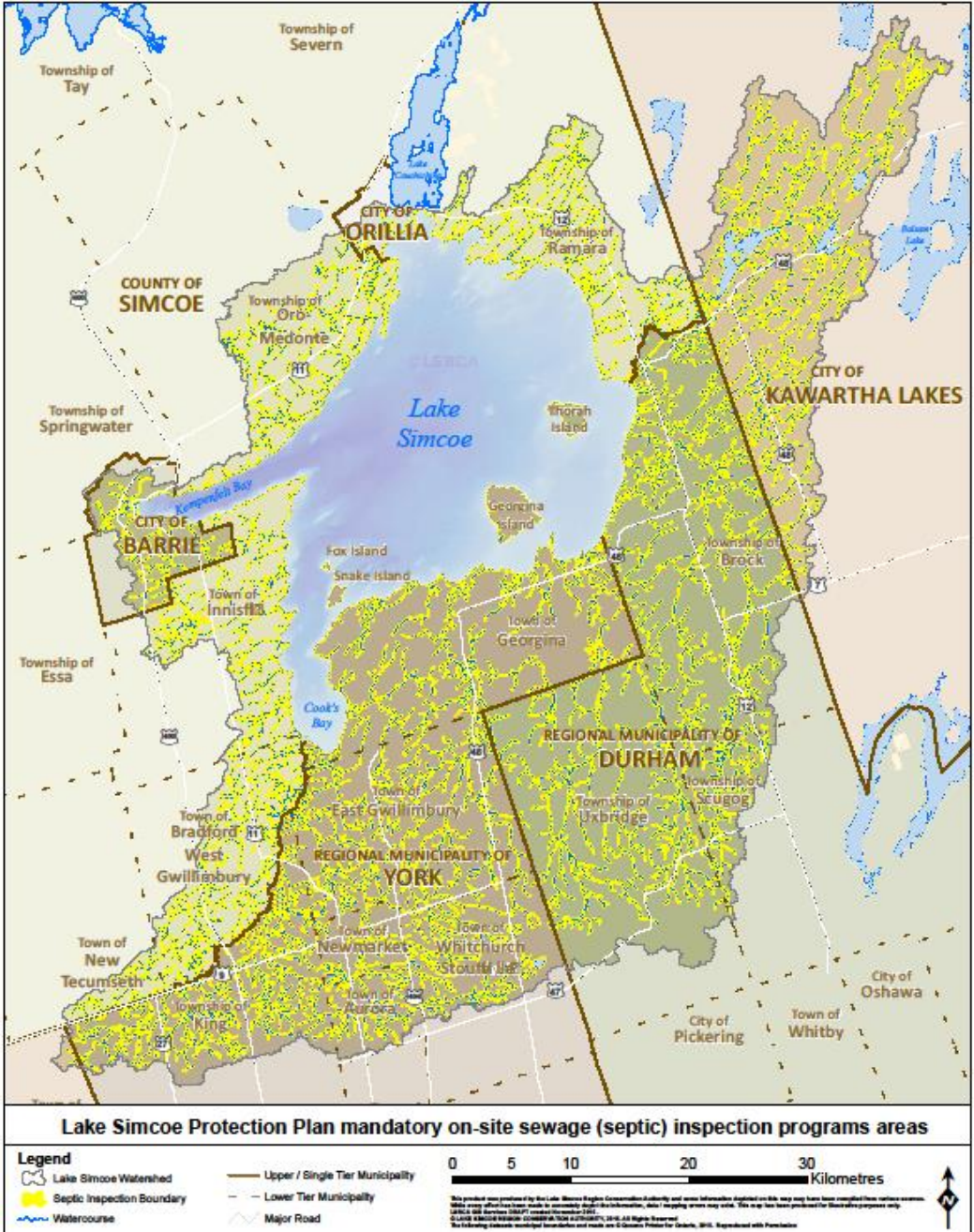
- In 2011 the Ontario Building Code was amended to establish and govern a Provincially-mandated private on-site sewage system maintenance inspection program to be administered by the Municipality. In 2016 further amendments expanded the scope of the provincially mandated inspection program.
- The Building Code amendments help protect our drinking water and the environment by supporting the implementation of the Clean Water Act and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. Risk management is provided to protect our ratepayers, our community and the Township.
- A Septic Maintenance Program (SMP) has been implemented within certain geographic areas of the Township of Oro-Medonte. The main purpose of the program is to protect the quality of our drinking water and environment by identifying malfunctioning on-site sewage systems that may be contributing to the contamination of source water in areas of Oro-Medonte

Intent of the Program

- ✓ Protection of Lake Simcoe and Municipal wells
- ✓ Municipality includes 2 major lakes and many tributaries (ponds, wetland, rivers & streams)
- ✓ Oro-Medonte is a rural municipality with well over 8000 existing septic systems
- ✓ There are 12 municipal drinking water systems
- ✓ Risk management to protect our ratepayers, our community and the Township
- ✓ Creates a record for the future



Lake Simcoe
Protection Plan
Mandatory on-site
sewage
inspection
program areas



Affected Properties & Applicable Cycles

- Program includes all properties within:
 - 100m of source water protection areas (i.e. Municipal well heads),
 - 100m of Lake Simcoe shoreline, and
 - 100m of tributary rivers, streams, lakes or ponds that drain to Lake Simcoe

Affected properties now entering second or third 5-year cycle.

Source Water Protection Areas

2012–2016 | 2017-2021 | 2022-2026

12 municipal
well heads

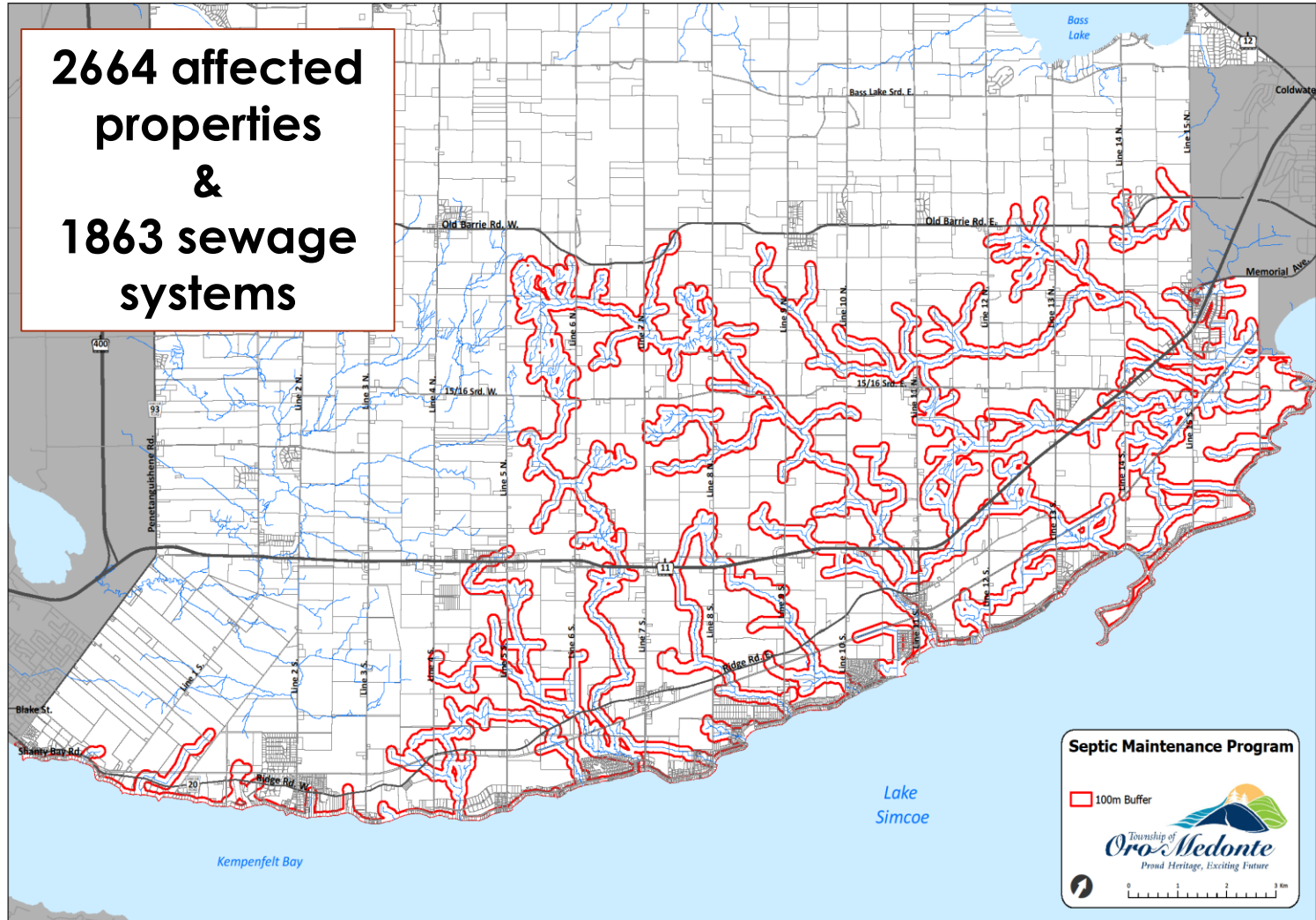
132 affected
properties
&
127 sewage
systems



Lake Simcoe Shoreline and Tributary Areas

2011–2015 | 2016–2020 | **2021–2025**

**2664 affected
properties
&
1863 sewage
systems**





Program Requirements

Township's responsibilities

Property owner's responsibilities

Cost Recovery

Township's responsibilities

The Township is responsible to communicate, inspect and obtain compliance for the program for each 5-year cycle.

- Communication is provided to all affected property owners.
- Municipal visual site inspections are conducted on all affected sewage systems.
- Obtain compliance for each sewage system.

Municipal Visual Site Inspection

The Ontario Building Code outlines sewage system operation and maintenance requirements that form the basis for the visual site inspection. Inspections are conducted to identify any evidence of malfunction or failure, a notification status card will be left on site.

- Shall not emit, discharge or deposit sanitary sewage or effluent onto the surface of the ground.
- Operated in accordance with the basis on which the use of the sewage system was approved and the requirements of the manufacturer.
- Land in the vicinity of a sewage system shall be maintained in a condition that will not cause damage to, or impair the functioning of, the sewage system.

SEPTIC MAINTENANCE PROGRAM



Inspector: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

A site visit was conducted with respect to the provincially mandated on-site sewage system maintenance program.

- Acceptable;** no followup required
- Acceptable;** minor deficiencies observed
(see over for details)
- Unacceptable;** evidence of septic malfunction or failure identified, contact our office ASAP.
- Unacceptable;** no access available; contact our office ASAP.



Minor deficiencies (no follow-up required):

- Eavestrough downspout water discharging onto septic system

- Minor encroachments on system
(i.e. small shed or play equipment)

- Excess vegetation

- Absence of fill around base of Class 1 Privy or Class 2 Greywater Pit
- Holding Tank alarm

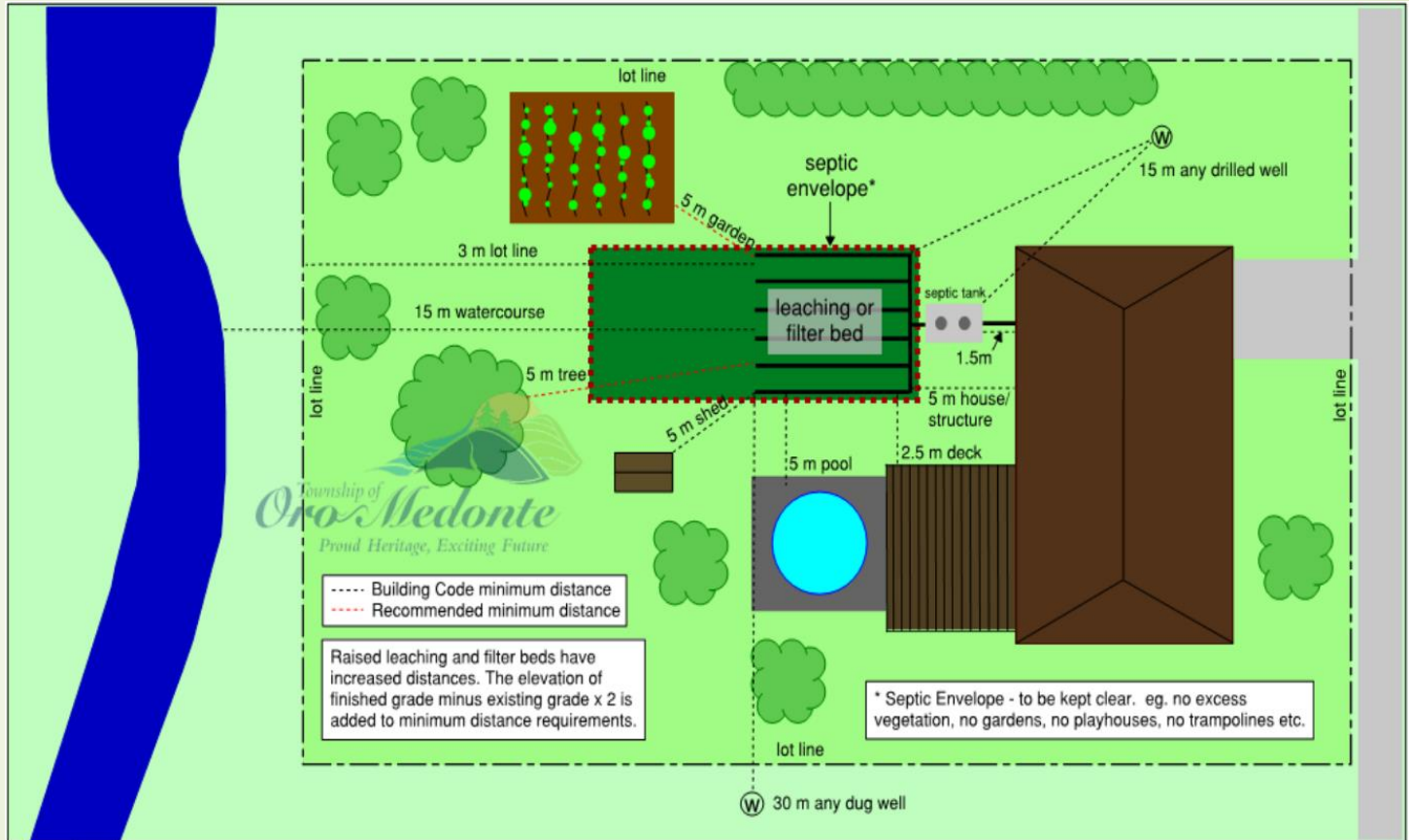
Documentation required:

- Septic/holding tank pumper's inspection report pending
- Treatment unit maintenance agreement pending



Municipal Visual Site Inspection

Minimum separation distances for septics



Property owner's responsibilities

Property owners are responsible to submit the appropriate supporting documents and pay the applicable fees.

➤ Submit the applicable supporting documents

Supporting documents may be submitted to smp@oro-medonte.ca

➤ Pay the applicable fees

- Fees are cost recovery to administer the On-Site Sewage System Maintenance Program.
- A \$29 fee will be applied annually to the affected property tax account in accordance with the Fees & Charges By-law as amended.

Supporting Documents

The Ontario Building Code outlines sewage system operation and maintenance requirements that form the basis for required supporting documents.

➤ **Septic Tank Inspection Report**

- Review tank inspection report for size, condition, material & operation.
- Septic tanks and other treatment units shall be cleaned whenever sludge and scum occupy one-third of the working capacity of the tank.

➤ **Maintenance Agreement**

- No person shall operate a treatment unit other than a septic tank unless the person has entered into a maintenance and service agreement.
- Every Class 5 sewage system (Holding Tank) shall be operated in accordance with an agreement for the disposal of sanitary sewage with a hauled sewage system operator.

➤ **Service Report**

- Applicable for Norweco & Aquarobic treatment units only. Will be accepted as an alternate document to above.

Septic Tank Inspection

Applicable for all septic tanks - except as noted under “Service Report”

- ✓ Retain a licensed sewage hauler or septic professional to conduct an inspection of your septic tank or holding tank. Obtain a copy of their inspection report.
 - Typically this does involve having the septic tank pumped. Under typical use a septic tank often requires pumping within 5 years. The Septic Smart guide recommends inspecting the system every three to five years and pumping out the solids and scum when required.
 - The Septic Smart guide can be found on [SepticSmart! \(gov.on.ca\)](http://SepticSmart!.gov.on.ca).
 - If your property is seasonal or otherwise not fully utilized you may wish to find a company that is able to inspect the tank without pumping.
- ✓ Submit their completed report to smp@oro-medonte.ca or mail/drop a copy to the Township Administration Office.
Note: invoices do not have sufficient details.

Sample of Septic Tank Inspection Report

Septic/Holding Tank Pumper's Inspection Report

Property Owner: _____

Property MAS: _____

Tank Type: Septic Tank Holding Tank

Tank Material: Concrete Plastic Steel

Tank Size: _____ Litres

Outlet T in place Yes No

Effluent Filter: Yes No

Effluent Level: Correct Height Above Outlet Below Outlet

Overall Tank Condition: Good Fair Poor

Tank Lid Condition: Good Fair Poor

Access Risers: Yes No

Location Sketch:

Company (pumper): _____

Name of Pumper: _____

Pump Date: _____

Note: This is a visual septic/holding tank inspection in conjunction with the provincially mandated on-site sewage system maintenance program.

Maintenance Agreement

Applicable for treatment units - except as noted under “Service Report”.

- ✓ Obtain a copy of your annual maintenance agreement.
 - Advanced treatment units (ie. Waterloo Biofilter, Ecoflo, Aquarobic, etc.) require annual maintenance. Submit a current maintenance record to the Township.
 - An advanced treatment system may be preferred where site conditions and soil types are not suitable for conventional septic systems. More information about advanced treatment systems can be found at the following link [SepticSmart! \(gov.on.ca\)](http://SepticSmart!.gov.on.ca).
- ✓ Submit the document to smp@oro-medonte.ca or mail/drop a copy to the Township Administration Office.

Service Report

Applicable for Norweco & Aquarobic treatment units only.
*Acceptable alternate document to Septic Tank Inspection Report and
Maintenance Agreement.*

- ✓ Obtain a copy of your recent Service Report from your maintenance provider.
- ✓ Submit the document to smp@oro-medonte.ca or mail/drop a copy to the Township Administration Office.



Commonly asked questions

1. What if I have a treatment unit?

- Visual inspections must be conducted on the entire system (septic tank, treatment unit, and distribution bed).
- Most systems include a septic tank and treatment unit (Exception is Aquarobic and Microfast).
- Units require annual maintenance and sampling as per your Maintenance Agreement.

2. What if I have a holding tank?

- Existing holding tanks are acceptable. Tanks shall be pumped and are maintained regularly. A visual tank report is required.

3. What if its only for seasonal use?

- All identified properties are subject to the program regardless of frequency of use.

4. How do I locate a qualified pumper?

- Referrals
- Yellow pages / Online search

5. Compliance goal

- Provincially legislated compliance is required for all properties. Those properties that have not complied by the deadlines will be subject to issuance of applicable Orders and further legal action. This is not the preferred approach for the Township.

6. How was the mapping created?

- The mapping has been provided to us by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) and Ministry of Environment (MOE).
- The Township is administering the program based on properties that are located within the 100m buffer from the lakes, streams, ponds and waterways identified by the LSRCA and MOE in this mapping.

7. Is there available funding?

- Please contact the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority, Severn Sound Environmental Association, or the County of Simcoe.

8. What if my sewage system is not within the 100m buffer?

- Staff conducted a comprehensive review of all affected properties based on mapping and septic records. All sewage systems identified outside the boundary were deemed exempt from future cycle compliance requirements.

9. If it is determined the tank and tile bed is not within the regulated distance why is the property not exempt from the program from that point forward?

- Properties located within the 100m boundary remain in the septic maintenance program. Although the sewage system may be outside the boundary, the remainder of the property is still within the program and staff are required to ensure future development does not change the status of the file.

10. What if I complied in the first 5 year cycle?

- Thank you for your cooperation
- The program is a reoccurring 5 year cycle with no end date identified by the Province.

11. Why is it necessary for Township staff to visually inspect the bed each time the tank is pumped, even after the first inspection/cycle has taken place? Can the pumper not confirm both the condition of the tank AND the tile bed?

- The Township administrates the program as a municipal staff inspection program. The Ontario Building Code (OBC) requires a qualified BCIN (Building Code Identification Number) Municipal Inspector to conduct the necessary visual inspections, which includes the tile bed, septic tank, and surrounding area. Previous administration through third party certificates was unsuccessful due to the varying cost and detail of reports provided.

12. Does the legislation apply to the stream only or does it actually apply to the regulated lands as well. Originally it applied only for the distance from an actual body of water (Lake Simcoe).

- The program includes all properties within:
 - 100m of Lake Simcoe shoreline (2011)
 - 100m of source protection areas - Municipal well heads (2012)
 - 100m to rivers, streams, lake or ponds (*New for 2016)
- Properties have been identified through mapping provided by the LSRCA, MOE and OBC requirements

13. If we have a qualified maintenance inspection program for our septic and tile bed, why do we also need the inspection from the Township?

- Advanced Treatment units and the requirement for annual inspections address ONLY the treatment unit and not the tile bed or septic tank. The provincially mandated septic maintenance program does not exempt advanced treatment systems.

14. It does not seem reasonable for one individual living in a home with a 1000 gallon tank to be required to have it pumped every five years rather than a longer period of time. What, if any, consideration can be given for this?

- Seasonal or occasional use is not monitored or regulated by the Township; all identified properties are subject to the same Provincial requirements regardless of use or occupancy.
- The inspection report is a visual inspection of the septic tank and if the tank is not pumped a measurement of the sludge and scum would be needed to ensure that it does not occupy more than one-third of the working capacity of the tank. You may wish to find a company that is able to assess the capacity of solids and scum to avoid unnecessary pumping.

Available Resources

- [Ontario Building Code](#)
- [Ontario Waste Water Association](#)
- [Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority](#)
 - Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Act
- [Severn Sound Environmental Association](#)
 - Clean Water Act
- [County of Simcoe](#)
- [Township of Oro-Medonte](#)

(705) 487-2171 ext. 2180

septic@oro-medonte.ca

Questions



Contact us at:

smp@oro-medonte.ca

OR

705-487-2171 EXT 2181