

# ON-SITE SEWAGE SYSTEMS

Development Services - Building Division

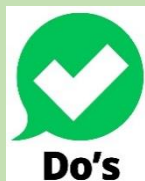


Did you know that septic systems are the responsibility of you the homeowner? It is up to you to keep your system working properly to protect your environment, your health and your investment. When properly designed, constructed and maintained, a septic system should provide long-term, effective treatment of your household wastewater. If you take good care of your system you will save yourself the time, money and worries involved in replacing a failed system. Failed systems can be hazardous to your health, the environment and your pocketbook. It can degrade water supplies and reduce your property value. Below are some valuable tips to ensure the longevity of your system.

## Ask To See The License!

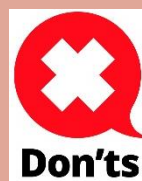
Anyone in the business of pumping and cleaning septic tanks must be licensed by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Anyone who installs, repairs or services septic tanks must be licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.



- **Know Your System** - locate septic components and keep detailed records
- **Stay on Schedule** - Clean filters annually, test alarms, and get regular professional inspections
- **Protect it** - Keep water away, avoid planting near, and keep vehicles off the system
- **Use Wisely** - Fix leaks and conserve water to avoid overloading the system

Properly maintained septic systems should provide long-term effective treatment of household wastewater.

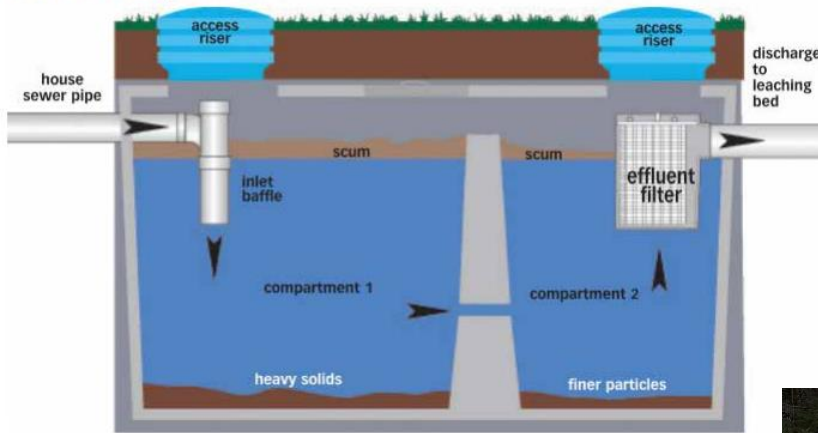


- **Risk Safety** - Never enter the tank or dig without knowing what's below
- **Cut Corners** - Only use licensed professionals for inspections and maintenance
- **Damage it** - Don't park, build, plant or drain extra water over the septic system
- **Flush Trouble** - No chemicals, wipes, food waste, or 'miracle' additives - just the basics!

Failed septic systems can be harmful to your health, hazardous to the environment, degrade water supplies, and reduce property value.

If you live in a rural area or a small community or if you have a cottage, chances are you have a septic system. Septic systems are onsite treatment units that eliminate the need for municipal sewers in rural areas. Anything that goes down the drain — every shower drip and every toilet flush — flows to the septic system. Septic systems are comprised of a tank, a network of pipes and billions of organisms that process your waste.

The most common septic system consists of a septic tank and leaching bed — all of which is hidden beneath the soil. All household wastewater exits your home through an underground pipe that leads to the buried septic tank. The waste flows to the first compartment of the tank where the heavy solids settle and the lighter materials (fats, oils and grease) float to the top as scum. Baffles and screens keep this scum layer from escaping the tank and flowing to the leaching bed. This scum is removed when the tank is pumped during regular maintenance. In the second compartment of the tank, finer particles settle to the bottom. Organic materials break down in the tank. On newer systems, any remaining organic material is trapped and decomposes on a screen called the effluent filter located at the outlet of the tank.



For questions regarding Septic Systems, please contact the Building Division. Email us at [septic@oro-medonte.ca](mailto:septic@oro-medonte.ca), call (705) 487-2171, or visit [www.oro-medonte.ca/SafeSeptic](http://www.oro-medonte.ca/SafeSeptic).