

SEPTIC TANK PUMP-OUT

A key reason to maintain your septic system is to save money! Failing septic systems are expensive to repair or replace, and poor maintenance is often the culprit. Having your septic system pumped and inspected every 5 years is a bargain when you consider the cost of replacing the entire system. If you must use a garbage disposal, you should get your tank pumped more frequently. When it is time to have your tank pumped, choose a licensed septic cleaner and use the checklist below to ensure that all steps are completed.

WHAT WILL THE PUMPER DO?

Before Pumping

- ❑ Note the liquid level of the tank in relation to the tank's outlet pipe. A liquid level below the outlet pipe usually indicates a tank leak. A liquid level above the outlet pipe can indicate a problem with the pipe to the drainfield or the drainfield itself.

Pumping

- ❑ Pump the tank from the manhole. Pumping from inspection ports may damage tees and baffles. However, if pumping must occur from inspection ports, be sure to pump from both ports in order to pump all areas of the tank.
- ❑ Watch for backflow from the tank outlet pipe. Significant backflow indicates a drainfield system backup. A small amount of backflow can indicate a problem in the pipe to the drainfield.
- ❑ Pump the tank thoroughly. Use a septage spoon and backflush to loosen the sludge in the corners of the tank.
- ❑ Do not "seed" the tank by leaving septage in it.
- ❑ Do not scrub or power wash the tank's walls.
- ❑ If your tank has a filter, have the filter washed into the tank.

After Pumping

- ❑ Check the empty tank and note any signs of structural damage such as an open weep hole, leaking midseam, damaged baffles, or cracks.
- ❑ Ensure that your pumper files the required pump-out report with the Town Health Department and explain to you his findings. Keep a copy of your receipt & pumpout report.
- ❑ Your pumper may say you need one or more risers over the access holes. CT Public Health Code requires tanks to have a riser to within 12" of grade, so that pumpers can easily service your tank!



How Can I Reduce the Number of Pump-outs Needed?

You can save time and money by taking a few daily precautions that reduce the frequency of pump-outs your system will need:

- **To flush or not to flush.** Aside from wastewater, toilet paper is the only other thing that should be flushed. Using the toilet to dispose of sanitary products, paper towels, disposable diapers, cigarette butts, and even tissues will harm your septic tank and cause you to need pump-outs more often.
- **Don't use a kitchen garbage disposal.** Septic systems are not intended to dispose of food waste, coffee grounds, grease, or fat, and, in fact, they will harm the septic tank. Try using a compost pile; it will reduce the number of pump-outs your system needs!
- **Reducing water usage** will protect your septic system. Repair leaky faucets and toilets; install low-flow water fixtures, and turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving. Water conservation reduces the load of wastewater your septic system has to handle.

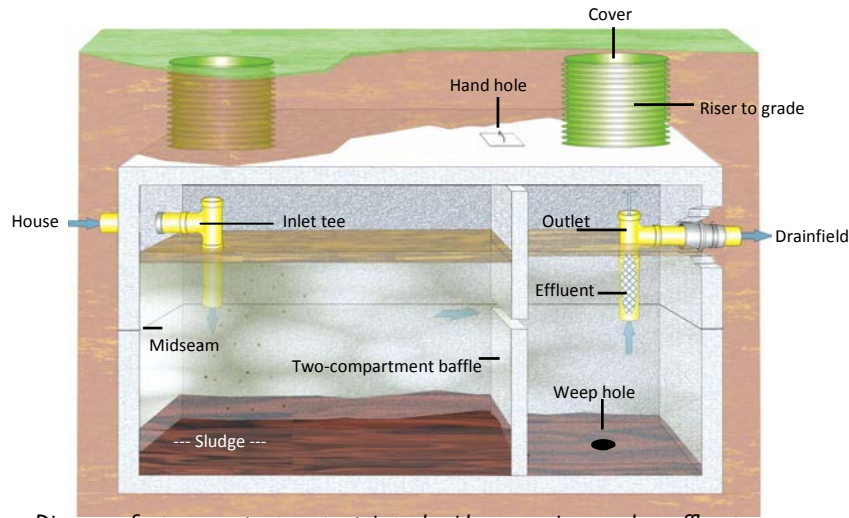


Diagram of a two- compartment septic tank with access risers and an effluent screen.

Will System Additives Reduce the Number of Pump-Outs Needed?

- While some manufacturers claim that biological additives enhance treatment and reduce the number of pump-outs your system will need, research indicates that biological enzymes and other “miracle” system additives do not improve septic system functioning. The amount of bacteria or enzyme in each does of additive is so small, that its effectiveness is virtually undetectable.
- Using additives to avoid pumping may cause even bigger problems. Without proper pump-outs, solids will flow into and clog the drainfield, resulting in an expensive repair process.

SEPTIC SYSTEM PUMP-OUT RECORD

Date	Service Provider	Cost	Notes