

# Why is maintaining your septic system important?

Septic systems must be maintained regularly to stay working. Neglect or abuse of your system can cause it to fail.

Failing systems can cause:

- serious health threat to your family and neighbors
- degrade the environment
- reduce the value of your property
- can be expensive to repair
- can put water supply users at risk

Look for the signs of a failing system!

For a list of Septic Waste Haulers please visit the Board of Health website or call the office at 508-533-3206.

[www.townofmedway.org/board-health](http://www.townofmedway.org/board-health)

# Beware of Stormwater Pollution

Stormwater recharges our water aquifers with fresh, clean water for our drinking supply, our agricultural needs, our environmental needs, and our aquatic recreational fun.

Run-off from our paved surfaces and lawns can wash pollutants into our streams, rivers, and ocean.

Infiltration of pollutants can contaminate our groundwater with pathogens making our water supply not drinkable, our shellfish areas uneatable, and our aquatic environment destroyed.

Proper maintenance of septic systems is an essential component to keeping our water resources clean.

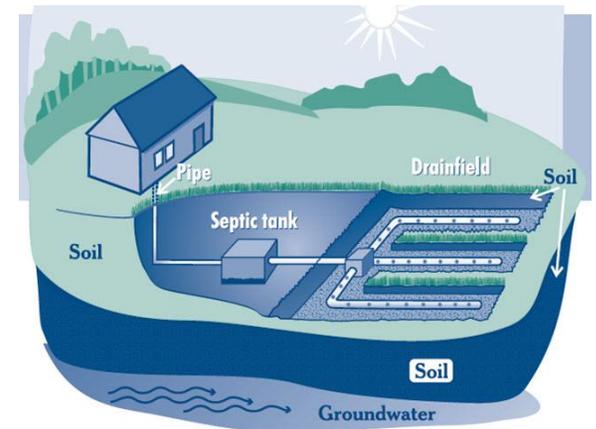
Department of Public Works  
45 Holliston Street  
508-533-3275

[www.townofmedway.org/stormwater-management](http://www.townofmedway.org/stormwater-management)

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# Caring for your Septic System



*Help keep our waters clean*

# How Septic Systems Work

A conventional septic system consists of a septic tank, a distribution box, and a drain field, all connected by pipes, called conveyance lines.

Your septic system treats your household wastewater by temporarily holding it in the septic tank where heavy solids and lighter scum are allowed to separate from the wastewater. This separation process is known as primary treatment. The solids stored in the tank are decomposed by bacteria and later removed, along with the lighter scum, by a professional septic tank pumper.

After partially treated wastewater leaves the tank, it flows into a distribution box, which separates this flow evenly into a network of drain field trenches. Drainage holes at the bottom of each line allow the wastewater to drain into gravel trenches for temporary storage. This effluent then slowly seeps into the subsurface soil where it is further treated and purified (secondary treatment).

A properly functioning septic system does not pollute the groundwater.



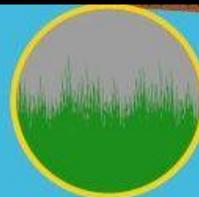
Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.

## 5 SIGNS YOUR TANK NEEDS CLEANING



### Pooling Water

You might have a clog in the system or a full tank.



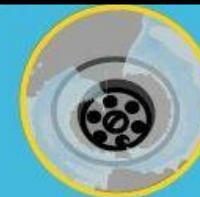
### Overly Healthy Lawn

If your lawn is greener over your septic field, your septic system might be overflowing.



### Foul Smell

If you notice a bad smell, you should have your system checked.



### Slow Drainage

If the water drains slowly, it might be time for the system to be serviced.



### System Backup

If your system is full, smelly sludge might come out of your plumbing fixtures.