

## Watch what you flush down the drain!

Don't flush dental floss, feminine hygiene products, condoms, diapers, cotton swabs, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, cat litter, paper towels, or other kitchen and bathroom items that can clog and potentially damage system components if they become trapped.

Don't flush household chemicals such as gasoline, oil, pesticides, antifreeze, or paint. These items can stress or destroy the biological treatment taking place in the system.

## Did you know?

Doing the household laundry in one day may seem like a time saver, but it could be harmful to your septic system. Doing load after load does not allow your septic tank time to adequately treat wastes. You could be flooding your drain field without allowing sufficient recovery time. Try to spread out the water usage throughout the week.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

### Lorain County Health Department

9880 Murray Ridge Rd.  
Elyria, Ohio 44035  
440-322-6367

### Sheffield Village Service Department

4480 Colorado Ave.  
Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054  
440-949-6209

### EPA Onsite Management Homepage

[www.epa.gov/owm/onsite](http://www.epa.gov/owm/onsite)

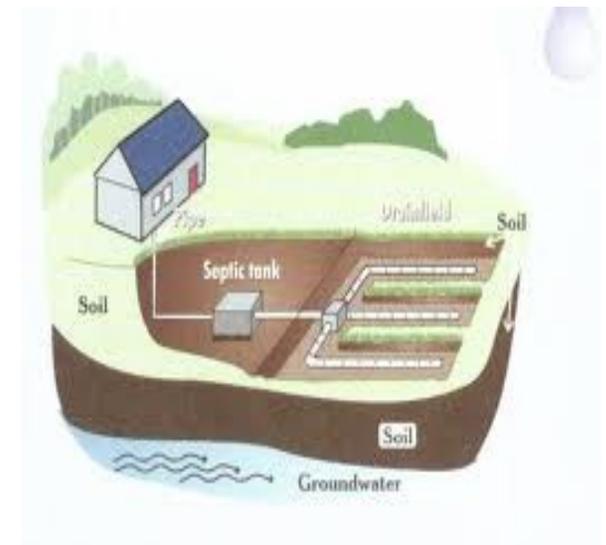
### National Small Flows Clearinghouse

[www.nesc.wvu.edu](http://www.nesc.wvu.edu)

### Rural Community Assistance Program

[www.rcap.org](http://www.rcap.org)

## A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems



## Septic Systems Maintenance Guide

## YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM is your responsibility!

### What are the top four things you can do to protect your Septic System?



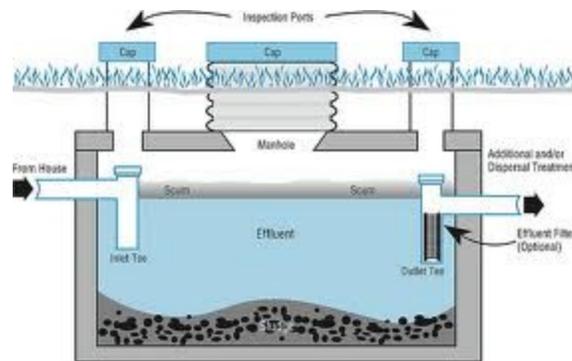
1. Inspect your system (every 2 years) and pump your tank as necessary (generally every 3 to 5 years).
2. Use water efficiently.
3. Don't dispose of household hazardous wastes in sinks or toilets.
4. Care for your drain field.

**How does it work?** A typical septic system has four main components: a pipe from the home, a septic tank, a drain field, and the soil. Microbes in the soil digest or remove most contaminants from wastewater before it eventually reaches groundwater.

**Pipe from the home:** All of your household wastewater exits your home through a pipe to the septic tank.

**Septic tank:** The septic tank is a buried, watertight container typically made of concrete. It holds the

water long enough to allow solids to settle out (forming sludge) and oil and grease to float to the surface (as scum). It also allows partial decomposition of the solid materials. Compartments and a T-shaped outlet in the septic tank prevent the sludge and scum from leaving the tank and traveling to the drain field area. Screens are also recommended to keep solids from entering the drain field.



### Why should I maintain my septic system?

When septic systems are properly designed, constructed, and maintained, they effectively reduce or eliminate most human health or environmental threats posed by pollutants in household wastewater. They require regular maintenance and can fail if neglected. Septic systems need to be monitored to ensure that they work properly throughout their service lives.

### What does an inspection include?

- Locating the system.
- Uncovering access holes.
- Flushing the toilets.
- Checking for signs of a backup.
- Measuring scum and sludge layers.
- Identifying any leaks.
- Inspecting mechanical components.



If you see an **illicit discharge** in the storm sewers in your area call the Illicit Discharge Hotline @ Sheffield Village Service Department directly at 440-949-6209.