

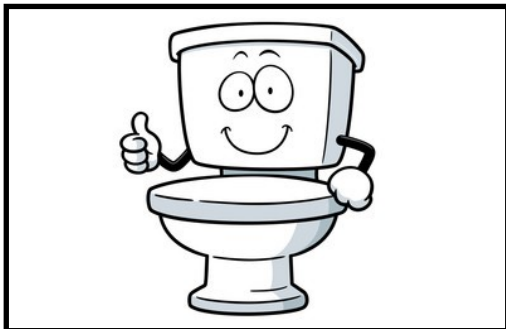
Septic Systems

Wisconsin is home to nearly 800,000 septic systems, serving about 1/3 of the state population. Properly managing and maintaining them is essential in keeping the environment clean for future generations.

Homeowners are the caretakers of their own septic systems. There are several things to bear in mind to prolong the longevity and help protect your septic.

DON'T FLUSH: wipes, litter, condoms, cigarette butts, floss, paper towels, hygiene products.

DON'T POUR: grease or oil, solvents, paint or paint thinner, water softener brine, coffee grounds, petroleum, garbage disposal waste



Contact Info:

Department of Safety
& Professional Services

4822 Madison Yards Way
Madison WI 53705

Phone: 608-266-2112

Email:
DSPSSBPowtsTech@Wisconsin.gov

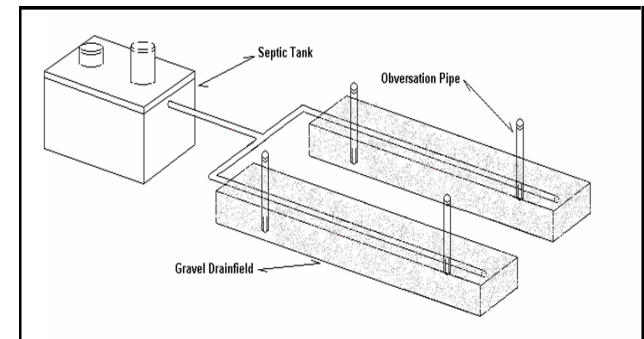
Website:
<https://dsps.wi.gov>

For more information:

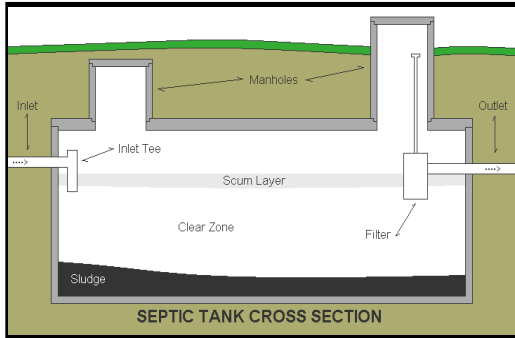


- POWTS -

Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems



Septic Components



The septic tank is first noticeable component in your yard. Most tanks will have one or more manholes extending above the ground surface.

Holding tanks are systems without a drainfield. All water that enters the tank must be pumped out by truck periodically, when full.

However, most systems have a drainfield. There are several types (mound, conventional, at-grade), but all function basically the same; treat the effluent and return clean treated water back to the environment.

Maintenance

In a septic tank, solids settle to the bottom while fats, oils & grease float to the top. After basic decomposition, the clearer water (effluent) will exit through a filter into a drainfield.

Maintenance is required on tanks periodically. Every three years, the tank must be pumped if at least one third of the tank capacity is determined to be scum and sludge. Tanks with less than that, do not need to be pumped.

Filters should be serviced when the tank is pumped or possibly more frequently, depending on household use.

Failure to perform regular maintenance may result in early failure of your system. Regular maintenance also allows for professionals to assess all septic components. This may identify other areas of concern before they become a costly problem.

Regulation

Wisconsin has what is known as “Uniform Plumbing Laws”. This means that you can be assured of hiring a qualified, licensed plumber who meets a uniform standard, anywhere in the state.

In the case of septic systems, this set of rules is administered not only by state staff but by county delegated agents as well. In fact, county staff do the majority of permit issuance and inspections.



If you have specific questions about septic systems, see the contact information on the back of this brochure. Otherwise, you may also contact your local agent (typically county zoning dept).