

Hidden Dangers

Septic tanks are a potential life threatening danger. It is the owners responsibility to make sure tanks and openings are secured to prevent accidental or unauthorized access.

Numerous health issues are associated with entering septic tanks or exposure to the raw sewage inside. There are physical hazards of falls, drowning, and asphyxiation. Not to mention the biological hazards of infections and disease.

Septic tank covers should only be opened by a trained person or a professional. DO NOT attempt any troubleshooting or servicing if you are not trained! You may damage the system or worse, injure yourself or others.

Entry of a tank is a confined space. It should only be attempted if there is no alternative, the persons are trained for confined space entry, and the required protective gear is used.

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 -
Septic Tank Safety



Responsibility

The installing master plumber is responsible for the original construction. This includes initial code compliant condition of the septic system. Approved plans and a state sanitary permit are required for any installation or modification to a septic system. Manufacturers are required to have their products approved according to industry guidelines and administrative code. The septic tank (and rest of the system) is inspected by a local (usually county) official for code compliance.

After the initial inspection, responsibility doesn't end there. When maintenance is performed, the pumper or servicer should verify all tank(s) and openings are locked or secured.

However, ultimate responsibility falls upon the owner to make sure their tank is locked and secured from unauthorized access.

Safeguards

SPS 384.25(7)(h) states "Covers located at or above ground for openings larger than 8 inches in diameter shall be provided with locking devices or other effective measures to prevent unauthorized access." SPS 384.25(8)(b) also requires a warning label to be attached to the cover.

Be proactive - prevention is the key!!!



Check for chains and locks!



Check for secured covers!

Accidents Happen

Every year, injuries and even deaths occur from accidental or unauthorized access of septic tanks.

Not only are you protecting yourself, but your family, visitors, and neighbors from injury or death. Nobody wants an injury (or worse).

The following are news headlines that nobody wants to see. As terrible as they are, every one is a preventable tragedy.

"Child in critical condition following fall in septic tank", EAU CLAIRE, WI - April 6, 2023

"Sheriff: Boy found dead in septic tank in apparent accident", CRES-CENT CITY, FL - March 28, 2022

"2-year-old dies after falling into septic tank, coroner says", GAFFNEY, SC - May 10, 2022

"Toddler deaths from falling into septic systems", SKAGIT CTY, WA - April 2015