

Smart Septic Week is in September! Are you Septic Smart?

Septic systems are separate from the county sanitary sewer system, the main difference being septic systems treat wastewater *onsite*, whereas the County sanitary sewer system transports wastewater to be treated at one of four water reclamation facilities. Check your water bill, if you are not charged for sewer, most likely you have an onsite sewage treatment system or septic tank and Smart Septic Week is the perfect time to check in on your system.

Having an onsite sewage treatment system requires proper care and ongoing maintenance. Familiarizing yourself with preventative measures will significantly reduce the hassle and expense of system repair or replacement and reduce or eliminate health risks and negative impacts on the environment. Every septic owner should understand how to maintain a septic system and recognize signs of system failure.

Septic systems have three components:

- The septic tank removes large solids, protecting absorption field from clogs.
- The absorption field distributes wastewater into the soil.
- The soil filters clean and moves wastewater from absorption field to ground or surface water.

Maintenance Requirements:

- Pump septic tank every 3-5 years, removing all liquids and solids
- Inspect system when wastewater backs up into home
- Inspect system when the absorption field has standing water or excessive plant growth
- Inspect system when elevated bacteria levels occur downstream from your property

Common Causes of Failure:

- Unsuitable soils
- Construction faults
- Onsite Water Management
- Water leaks, dripping fixtures fill up the tank

Simple Checks and Fixes

- Use Low-Flow Fixtures
- Check Water Pressure – should be 80 psi
- **Do not** use the toilet or sink to dispose of household waste (medicine, cleaners, etc.)
- **Do not** use the garbage disposal
- Limit use of drain cleaners, bleach, and other strong chemicals in toilets and sinks
- Direct downspouts and other runoff away from the absorption field

Join us for a virtual Lunch & Learn Friday, September 25, 2020 from 12:00-12:45pm on Septic System Basics: General Care and Maintenance. No charge, registration is required.

Related Resources

- [Protecting Your Septic System](#)
- [A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems](#)

Septic systems, in Cobb County, are regulated by [Cobb Public Health](#)

To watch a short video on septic systems go to <https://www.cobbcounty.org/watershed-stewardship/education/septic-systems>