

# Operation & Maintenance

1. Pump Your Tank Regularly
2. Use Water Wisely
3. Know What Not To Flush
4. Avoid Hazardous Chemicals
5. Have Your System Inspected
6. Protect Your System



Avoid washing scraps, coffee grinds, grease, etc. down drain; garbage disposals can require more frequent pump-outs

**Conserve water!** Turn it off while washing hands and brushing teeth, avoid taking long showers, repair leaky faucets or running toilets, use washing machines and dishwashers only when full, and install water saving features.

### Protective Measures:

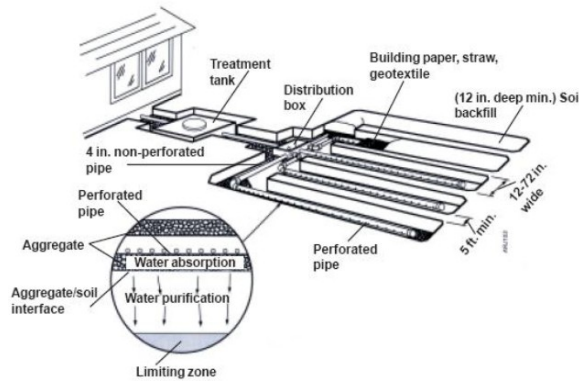
- Don't plant anything but grass nearby
- Don't operate heavy machinery nearby
- Don't build over the drain field
- Divert roof drains, surface water, and sump pumps away from drain field or tank treatment lid



No paints, varnishes, thinners, oils, pesticides, etc.; use cleaners sparingly



**Don't flush** plastics, paper towels, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, kitty litter, or any other inorganic matter



Your tank should be pumped **AT LEAST every 3 years!**



A yearly inspection is recommended to identify maintenance needs and functional status

*Inspections typically include a physical tour and examination of all on-lot system components*



## London Grove Township

372 Rose Hill Road  
Suite 100  
West Grove, PA 19390

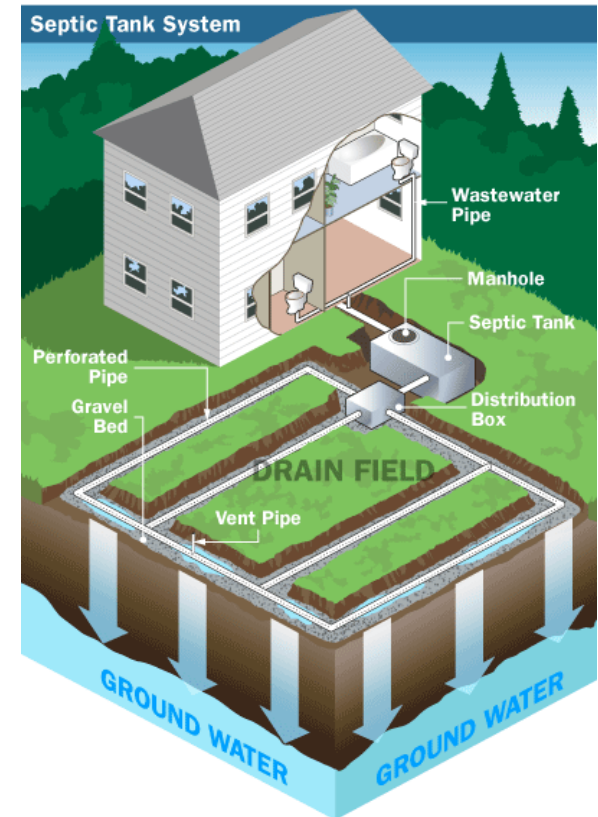
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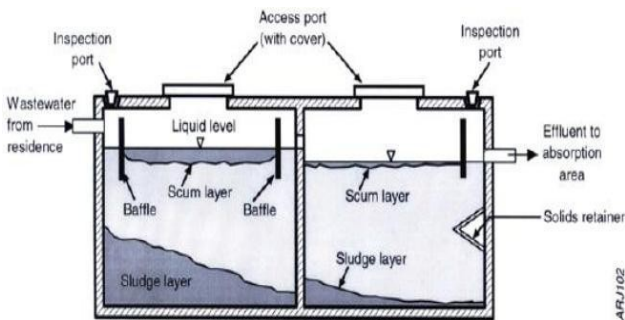
## On-Lot Sewage Maintenance Program



**Phone:** 610-345-0100

## Knowing Your System

- Septic systems are sewage systems designed to treat and dispose of domestic household sewage through natural processes.
- A basic septic system consists of a **treatment tank (septic tank)** and a **disposal area (drainfield)**. Both of these play important roles in cleaning wastewater and disposing it into the soil in an environmentally friendly manner.
- The **treatment tank** is a large watertight “box” usually made of concrete with an inlet and outlet pipe. Wastewater flows from the home to the treatment tank through a sewer pipe.
- **Baffles** serve a very important role in preventing accumulating solids from leaving the tank.
- Common **types of drainfields**: standard trench, seepage bed, and elevated sand mound.
- **System additives** (chemical or biological) are controversial. Claims that they replace pumping or restore permeability of the soil are unsubstantiated. A homeowner doesn't need to anything to their system if it is maintained properly. No additive replaces inspections or pumping!



## LGT Ordinance 172

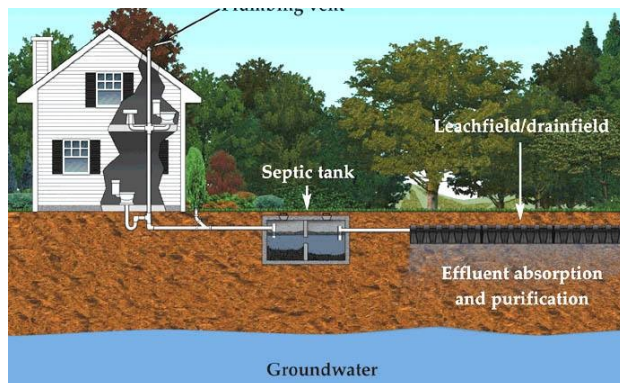
- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have strongly encouraged municipalities to adopt ordinances that provide for regular sewage system maintenance. LGT's on-lot sewage management program is the result of a commitment in the Township's Official Sewage Facilities Plan.
- Ordinance 172 provides for an On-Lot Sewage Maintenance Program that regulates systems. This ordinance will assist LGT in its duty to protect the public's health by preventing the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated sewage.

## Why Do We Pump?

- The treatment tank treats the wastewater naturally by holding it in the tank long enough for the solids and liquids to separate into three layers: solids lighter than water (scum), heavier than water (sludge), and liquid wastewater (effluent).
- It is very important to remove these solids as they will eventually build up to the point that the tank no longer has enough liquid area to allow for adequate microbial activity or settling. These solids will then pass through the tank to the drainfield, which results in greater risk for groundwater contamination and premature failure. Replacing/repairing a drainfield costs significantly more than regular maintenance.

## Pumpers + Inspectors

- All sewage pumpers/haulers in Chester County are required to be licensed by the Chester County Health Department (CCHD).
  - A list of licensed pumpers can be found on the County's website at [www.chesco.org/health/site/default.asp](http://www.chesco.org/health/site/default.asp) or you may call CCHD at (610) 344-6526 to obtain a copy.
- Many firms that are licensed to pump can also provide inspection services, and scheduling these things at the same time could save both time and money. There is no required certification in Pennsylvania for private sewage system inspectors, but a voluntary certification program is in place through the Pennsylvania Septage Management Association (PSMA). It's wise to verify a contractor's qualifications by checking for this certification or through references and other applicable licensing.
  - A list of inspectors can be found on PSMA's web site under at [www.pdma.net](http://www.pdma.net). Click on "About Us" and "Find a Service Provider."



## When to Inspect + Pump

- **General guideline:** whenever the solids and scum layers accumulate to 1/3 of the liquid depth of the tank. In lieu of constantly monitoring the depth of solids, a **yearly inspection with a maximum 3-year pumping interval** has become the accepted standard in Pennsylvania.
- The rate at which solids accumulate varies based upon how many people live in the house, whether or not the garbage disposal is used, and the size of the tank. Some households that have a really large family, an undersized tank, or use a garbage disposal may need to be pumped more frequently to avoid excess build-up.
- **Rule of Thumb:** "If it ain't broke, inspect it!"
- Regular inspections and pumping save you \$, prevent possible headaches, and protect the environment!

## Malfunction Guidance

1. **ID the problem**—slow drain, wastewater back-up, odors, lush green grass over part of system, wet spongy area, wastewater surfacing
2. **Check maintenance records and pump if needed**—Have you been pumping regularly?
3. **Locate the problem**— your CCHD permit shows where all sewage components are on property
4. **Evaluate recent changes or events**—Have you recently added a sump pump or changed any water run-off paths?
5. **Solve the problem**—always consult with a qualified contractor and the CCHD before making any repairs/replacements yourself
6. **Maintain your sewage system**—to prevent additional malfunctions

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