

5 Things That You Must Know About Your SEPTIC SYSTEM

1. "IT" DOESN'T JUST GO AWAY.

The defining feature of a toilet is that a flush makes it all go away. So long. Have a nice trip.

But if you have a septic system, "it" does not just go away. The water is treated by settling, natural biology, and filtration, then introduced back to the ground. But the solids are like that last couple at your

New Year's Eve party: they stick around, tanked.

Every septic system is an engineered machine. Like all machines, longevity requires your attention and maintenance. Ignore your septic system at your own smelly peril.

2. SEPTIC TANKS WIL FILL UP. EWWW.

No one wants to think about this, but there is a tank of poo in your backyard. When that tank gets full, bad things happen. Solids can creep into your leachfield. Flow may not be as robust as you want during that precarious, "oh please go away" part of the flush. Lastly, things can get backed up, all the way.

A septic tank should be pumped out every two to three years, and the filter cleaned.

But hold off on buying the paisley colored, shoulder length, rubber gloves. Enterprising people make a livelihood taking care of this for you. The cost is reasonable, the people professional, and their trucks have cool names. We like "honeywagon," or "weekend milk truck." If you don't know where your tank is, they have the tools to find it. Look them up online or check out our website for a recommended vendors list.

4. EVERY SEPTIC FIELD FAILS, SOONER OR LATER.

Nothing lasts forever. Sorry.

Your septic system will last longer if you:

- Regularly pump your septic tank.
- Maintain your plumbing; no running toilets.
- Avoid hosting your entire extended family for long periods of time.
- Do not flush anything you shouldn't, such as motor oil, solvents, lots of grease cutting detergents, or volleyballs.
- Be careful of water treatment systems that backflush. They can cause issues with tanks and fields.

When your leachfield loses its ability

to drain water, your system will either back up or break out. If it backs up, your lowest plumbing fixture, usually a shower or a basement toilet, will let you know in the most horrifically disgusting way possible. If you notice the toilet is draining slowly, your plumber may determine that the problem is your septic system. If you notice a bad smell, septic smell, or sulfur "rotten egg" smell outside near your leachfield, you probably have a breakout.

Any of these may indicate you need repair or maybe a replacement system. See the recommended inspectors list on our website.

3. SEPTIC LEACH FIELDS CAN BE FRAGILE.

Septic systems are designed and built many different ways. A barrel full of bullet holes is fun but not one of them. We know who you are.

Your soil types, surface slopes, available room on site, design flows, wastewater makeup, and many other details will all dictate how your leachfield is designed. But only a small percentage of fields are designed to take a vehicle load, and then only at request. Do not drive heavy equipment over your leachfield. Do not drop large trees on your leachfield. Do not put your swimming pool on your leachfield. Do not eat tacos then jump up and down on your leachfield.

Lawnmowers and garden tractors are fine, though be careful of the zero-turn mowers which are significantly heavier. ATVs and Snowmobiles are okay, too. Heck, we encourage those, because they are awesome.

Do not dig holes around your septic field, unless you like surprises.

5. A NEW OR REPLACEMENT SEPTIC SYSTEM MUST BE DESIGNED BY A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL.

The State of Maine regulates the design, inspection, and approval of new and replacement septic systems. A Licensed Site Evaluator is required to do the job.

Main-Land has a bunch of LSEs on staff and designs hundreds of septic systems annually.

So call us at 207-897-6752 or visit our website at www.main-landdci.com for more information on using and maintaining your septic system. We'll help you say, "So long."

*IT REALLY STINKS WHEN A SEPTIC SYSTEM FAILS.
WE DESIGN SEPTIC SYSTEMS SO THAT FLUSHING IS FINAL.*