

PROTECT OUR LAKES AND STREAMS

Failing septic systems are one source of bacteria and nutrient pollution in the creeks and streams that feed Lake Monroe. You can help by making sure your system is properly maintained.

SIGNS OF SEPTIC FAILURE

Surface failure is when the effluent from your septic appears on the ground surface. There should not be wet spots on your septic field.



Subsurface failure is when the soils can no longer accept the effluent being introduced to the subsurface soil and the systems backs up in the septic tank and then into your home.

In either case, call your local health department for assistance in repairing or replacing your system.

QUESTIONS?

Maggie Sullivan, Watershed Coordinator
812-558-0217
watershed@friendsoflakemonroe.org
www.friendsoflakemonroe.org/septic

Or contact your local health department.

FRIENDS OF LAKE MONROE
PO BOX 3145
BLOOMINGTON, IN 47402

How To Protect Your Septic System



**PROTECT YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM
PROTECT OUR WATER QUALITY**



Septic Care and Maintenance 101

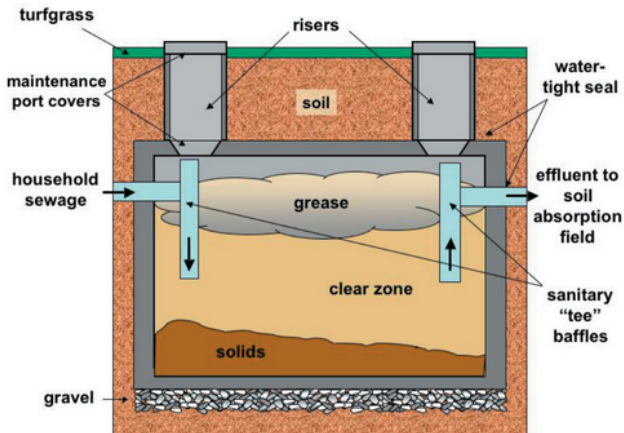
PROTECT IT AND INSPECT IT

Have your septic system serviced every 3-5 years including pumping and inspection. This will help ensure that your system is working properly.

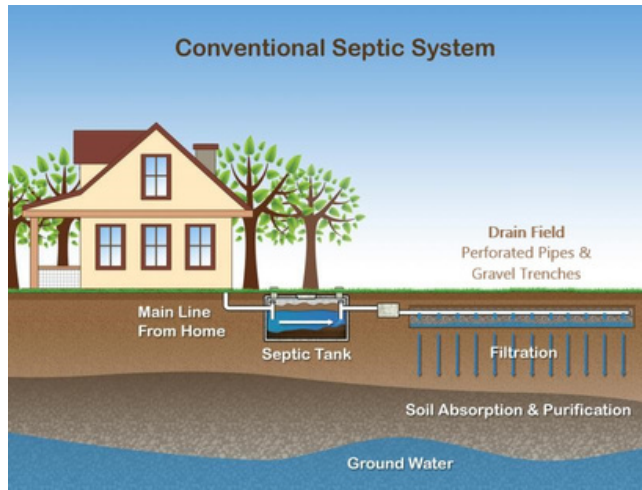
PUMP YOUR TANK

Every 3-5 years, hire a professional to pump out the solids and grease that accumulate in your tank.

Your septic tank is designed to store solids at the bottom and grease at the top, with only clear liquids going into your septic field. If your tank has too much grease or solids, it can flow into the septic field and clog the perforated pipes.



Septic tank diagram from Purdue University Extension Publication HENV-5-W "Septic Tanks: The Primary Treatment Device of Your Septic System"



SHIELD YOUR FIELD

Your septic drain field is a series of pipes that release water from your septic tank into the ground. Avoid driving or parking on your septic system, which can compact the soil and even break the pipes.

Plant only grass over and near your septic system. Roots from nearby trees or shrubs might clog and damage the septic drain field.

THINK AT THE SINK

Limit use of your garbage disposal and avoid pouring fats, grease, solids, or harsh chemicals down the drain. Fats, grease, and solids will accumulate in your septic tank while harsh chemicals will kill the healthy bacteria that live in your system.

DON'T OVERLOAD THE COMMODE

Your toilet is not a trash can. Avoid flushing anything that might clog the system or kill the bacteria that help break down waste. Stick with the 3 P's - Pee, Poop, and [Toilet] Paper.

NO CLOGGERS

Do not flush diapers, wipes, feminine hygiene products, cat litter, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, grease, fats, or other trash (even if it says "flushable.")

NO KILLERS

Do not flush bleach, gasoline, oil, pesticides, antifreeze, paint, or other chemicals that might kill the healthy bacteria in your septic tank.



DON'T STRAIN YOUR DRAIN

Stagger the use of water-based appliances like dishwashers and washing machines so that your septic system doesn't get overwhelmed with water.