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POUND RIDGE, NEW YORK 10576

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Pound Ridge Conservation Board
Town House, Westchester Avenue
Pound Ridge, NY 10576

YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM AND YOUR HEALTH.

**THIS MAILER TELLS YOU HOW A SEPTIC SYSTEM WORKS AND
HOW IT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED TO PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER.**

THE SPECIAL CHALLENGE OF POUND RIDGE.

Every developed property in Pound Ridge has its own septic system. Because of our ledges, rock, wetlands, and vernal pools, Pound Ridge is the most difficult town in Westchester in which to construct a successful septic system.

Every developed property in Pound Ridge has its own well. Your drinking water can be contaminated by a failed septic system. It could be your system. It could be your neighbors. We all share common aquifers.

FAILED SEPTIC SYSTEMS CAN:

- * Cause a serious health threat to your family and neighbors, or put thousands of people at risk if you live in a watershed.
- * Degrade the environment, especially lakes, streams and watersheds.
- * Be very expensive to repair; and
- * Reduce the value of your property.

THE SIGNS OF A FAILED SEPTIC SYSTEM:

- * Sewage surfacing over the drainfield or a spongy field (especially after rainstorms);
- * Lush green growth over the drainfield;
- * Slow draining toilets or drains; and
- * Sewage odors.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A SEPTIC FIELD BE PUMPED?

Some experts say every two to three years. Some say three to five. Our research unequivocally says: It depends. New York State says three years.

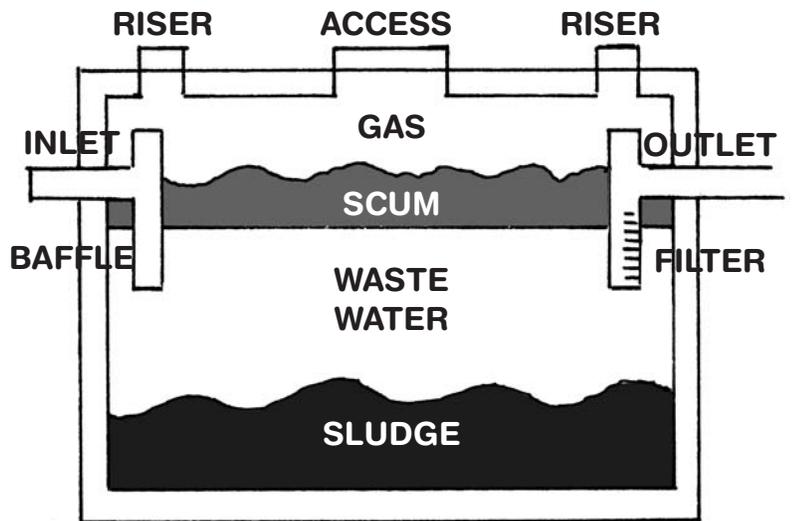
It depends if you're a full-time family of four or a week-end couple. It depends if you use a kitchen sink grinder. It all depends upon how you treat your system.

We'll give you some guidelines and suggestions.

HOW A SEPTIC TANK WORKS:

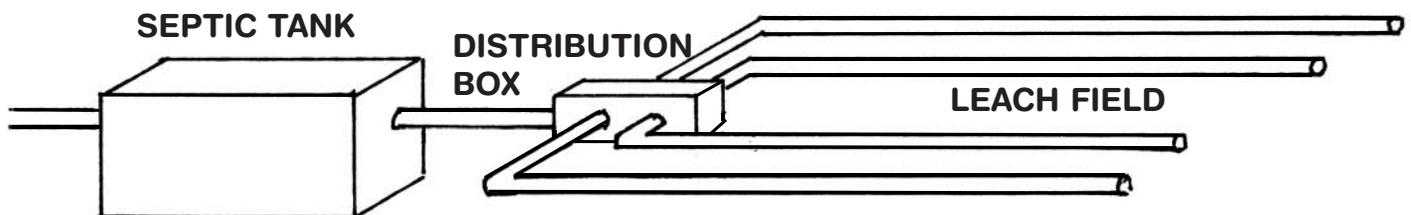
Solids and wastewater from your toilet, sink, laundry, etc. enter the septic tank. Solids settle to the bottom of the tank forming sludge. Oil and grease float to the surface and form scum. Microbes and bacteria work to partially decompose the solid materials and let them rise.

The T-shaped baffle prevents sludge and scum from leaving the tank and entering the leachfield.



HOW A LEACH FIELD WORKS:

The effluent from the tank enters a distribution box that directs it to the field, where it percolates through the soil and is purified on its way to our water table.



SEPTIC SENSE:

- Septic systems like to rest. Spread wash day throughout the week. Don't overload the system. The tank is only so big and the more water that runs into it means the more water is pushed out of it. Give the microbes a chance to work.
- A septic system is not a garbage can. Garbage disposals increase the amount of solids by 50% and could clog your system requiring extensive repairs. If you use one, use it sparingly and have your system pumped more often. We suggest that you compost vegetable matter. You'll create wonderful soil for your plants.
- Keep the area above your field undisturbed. Grass only. The roots of trees and shrubs can clog and damage the pipes. Pavement prevents evaporation and easy inspection. Cars and trucks can crush the pipes.
- Don't use commercial septic tank additives. Some contain organic solvents that will pollute the ground water. If you treat your system correctly, you don't need them.
- Practice water conservation. Repair dripping faucets and leaking toilets. (A leaking toilet can waste as much as 200 gallons a day.) Run washing machines and dishwashers only when full. Keep showers short.
- Divert roof drains and surface water from driveways away from the septic field.
- Use low-phosphate liquid detergents and toilet paper safe for septic systems.

SEPTIC SUICIDE:

- Keep Non-Degradables out of your septic system: grease, cigarette butts, cat litter, disposable diapers, plastic, paper towels, facial tissues, condoms, or feminine hygiene items.
- Chemicals can kill the beneficial bacteria that treat your waste water and poison your system. (And, possibly your ground water.) ie: gasoline, oil, paint, paint thinner, pesticides, antifreeze, pool water, water-softener discharges, prescription medicines, and excess household cleaners, including bleach.

SEPTIC SAFETY:

- Start by having your system pumped out and inspected every three years. Have your pumper report to you on the condition of the system. Keep a record. He can tell you the thickness of the scum layer and if it has too much grease. He will tell you the thickness of the sludge layer. This can help you modify life-style behavior. He can help you determine how often your system needs pumping.

YOUR PROPERLY WORKING SEPTIC SYSTEM HELPS KEEP ALL OUR DRINKING WATER PURE!

Here's a downloadable source:

www.epa.gov/owm/septic/pubs/homeowner_guide_long.pdf