

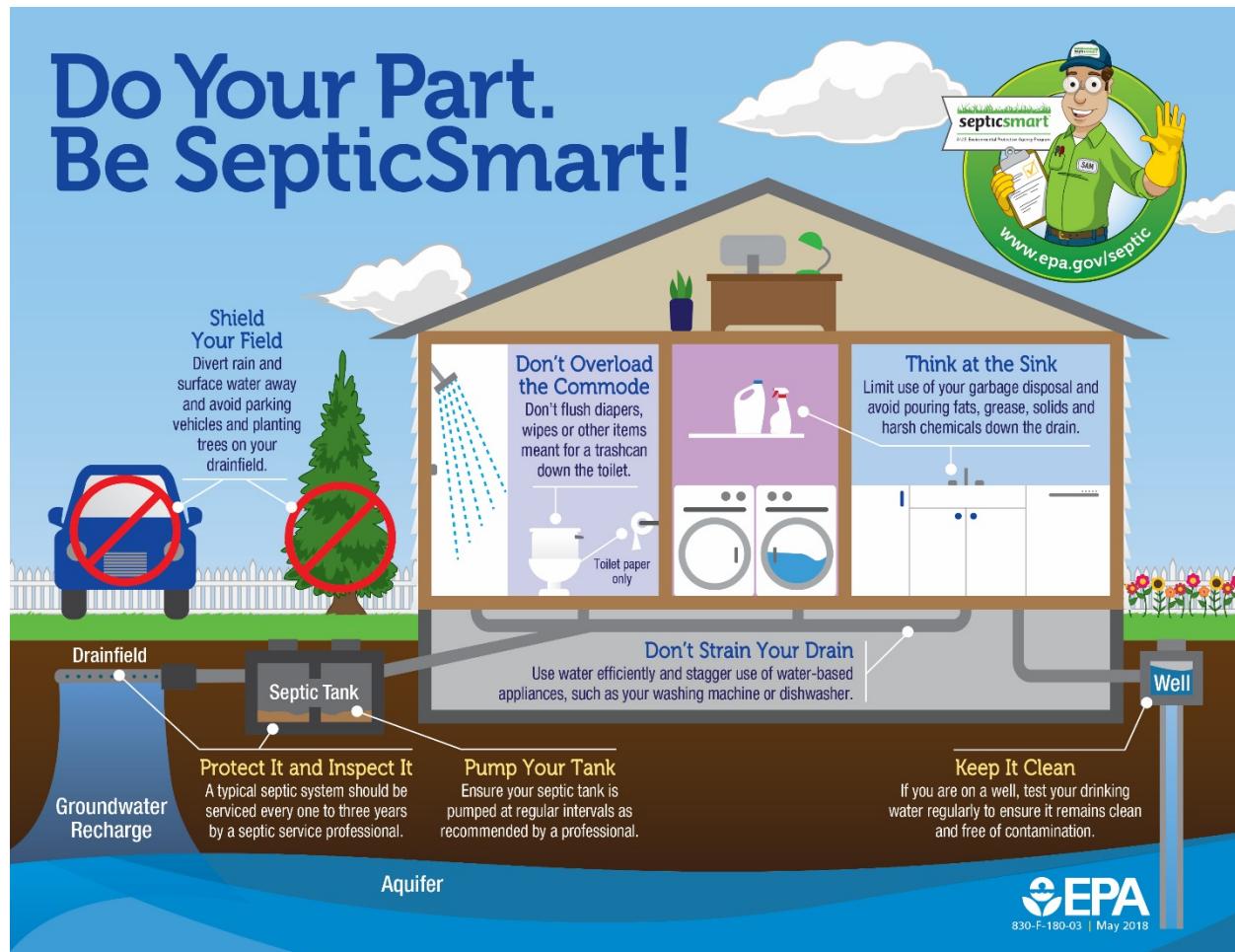


WaterSMART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Do Your Part, Be SepticSmart!

Did you know that one-quarter of all U.S. homes have septic systems? Yours may be one of them. If you're not properly maintaining your septic system, you're not only hurting the environment, you're putting your family's health at risk—and may be flushing thousands of dollars down the drain!

What Is a Septic System?

Common in rural areas without centralized sewer systems, septic systems are underground wastewater treatment structures that use a combination of nature and time-tested technology to treat wastewater from household plumbing produced by bathrooms, kitchen drains, and laundry.

Do You Have a Septic System?

You may already know you have a septic system. If you don't know, here are tell-tale signs that you probably do:

- You use well water
- The waterline coming into your home doesn't have a meter
- You show a "\$0.00 Sewer Amount Charged" on your water bill
- Your neighbors have a septic system

How to Find Your Septic System

Once you've determined that you have a septic system, you can find it by:

- Looking on your home's "as built" drawing
- Checking your yard for lids and manhole covers
- Contacting a septic inspector/pumper to help you locate it

Why Should You Maintain Your Septic System?

Maintaining Your Septic System...

Saves You Money

Regular maintenance fees of \$250 to \$300 every three to four years is a bargain compared to the cost of repairing or replacing a malfunctioning system, which can cost between \$3,000 and \$7,000. The frequency of pumping required for your system depends on how many people live in your home and the size of the system.

Protects Your Property Value

An unusable septic system or one in disrepair will lower your property value, not to mention pose a potentially costly legal liability.

Keeps You and Your Neighbors Healthy

Household wastewater is loaded with disease-causing bacteria and viruses, as well as high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. If a septic system is well-maintained and working properly, it will remove most of these pollutants. Insufficiently treated sewage from septic systems can cause groundwater contamination, which can spread disease in humans and animals. Improperly treated sewage also poses the risk of contaminating nearby surface waters, significantly increasing the chance of swimmers contracting a variety of infectious diseases, from eye and ear infections to acute gastrointestinal illness and hepatitis.

So, please do your part, and be SepticSmart!

For more information on septic systems and their care, go to WaterSmartSouthShore.org.

WaterSmart is a nonprofit partnership between the NSRWA and 12 towns on the South Shore: Cohasset, Duxbury, Hanover, Hingham, Hull, Kingston, Marshfield, Norwell, Pembroke, Rockland, Scituate and Weymouth. Our programs are based on the belief that education is key. Since its creation, WaterSmart has educated thousands of local school-age children, adults, and businesses on water conservation, stormwater pollution, where their water comes from, and how to care for it.

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