This file should remain with the property located at:

_____

_____

Septic System Recordkeeping File and Owner's Guide

This file folder and other information that you have received from your septic system professional should provide you with detailed information about your septic system and provide guidelines for the proper operation and maintenance of your system. Use this folder as a place to keep all information about your system including state approved plans, site drawings, governmental agency approvals/permits, descriptions and records of maintenance and other important documents. Before putting this folder away, please read and familiarize yourself with its content.

What is a Septic System?

A septic system is an on-site recycling system which treats wastewater and returns it to the groundwater. If properly designed, installed, used, and maintained, a septic system can do its work safely and efficiently for many years. Improper design, installation, use and/or maintenance can lead to premature and costly failure. We encourage you to understand how your system operates and how to use and maintain it properly to protect your investment and the environment.

A septic system typically consists of two components: the septic tank and the effluent disposal area (leach field). These components treat and renovate the wastewater so that it may safely return to the groundwater. Once a system is in place, it's now up to the system owner to perform the critical steps of proper use and maintenance.

System Permit:

Issued to:_____ Date Issued:_____

Address:_____

Tax Map & Lot #:_____

Construction Approval/Site Evaluation #:_____

Septic Tank Size (gallons):_____Number of Compartments:_____

Designer:_____

Address:_____

Telephone:_____Email:_____

License #:_____

Installer:_____

Address:_____

Telephone:_____Email:_____

License #:_____

Pumper:_____

Address:_____

Telephone:_____Email:_____

License #:_____

Granite State Designers and Installers Association

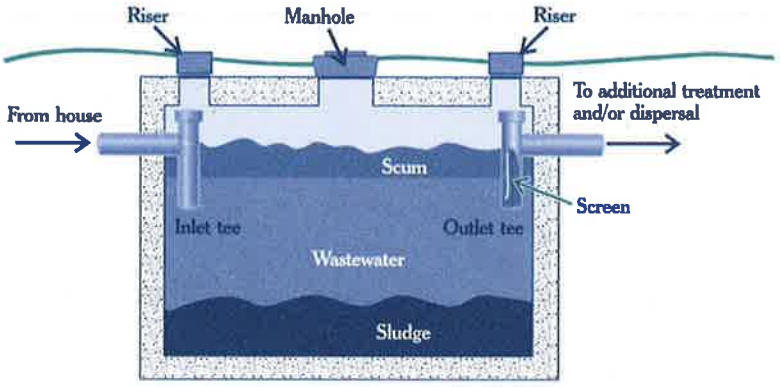
53 Regional Drive, Suite 1, Concord, NH 03301 (603) 228-1231 / info@gsdia.org

www.GSDIA.org

Your Onsite Wastewa

The Septic Tank

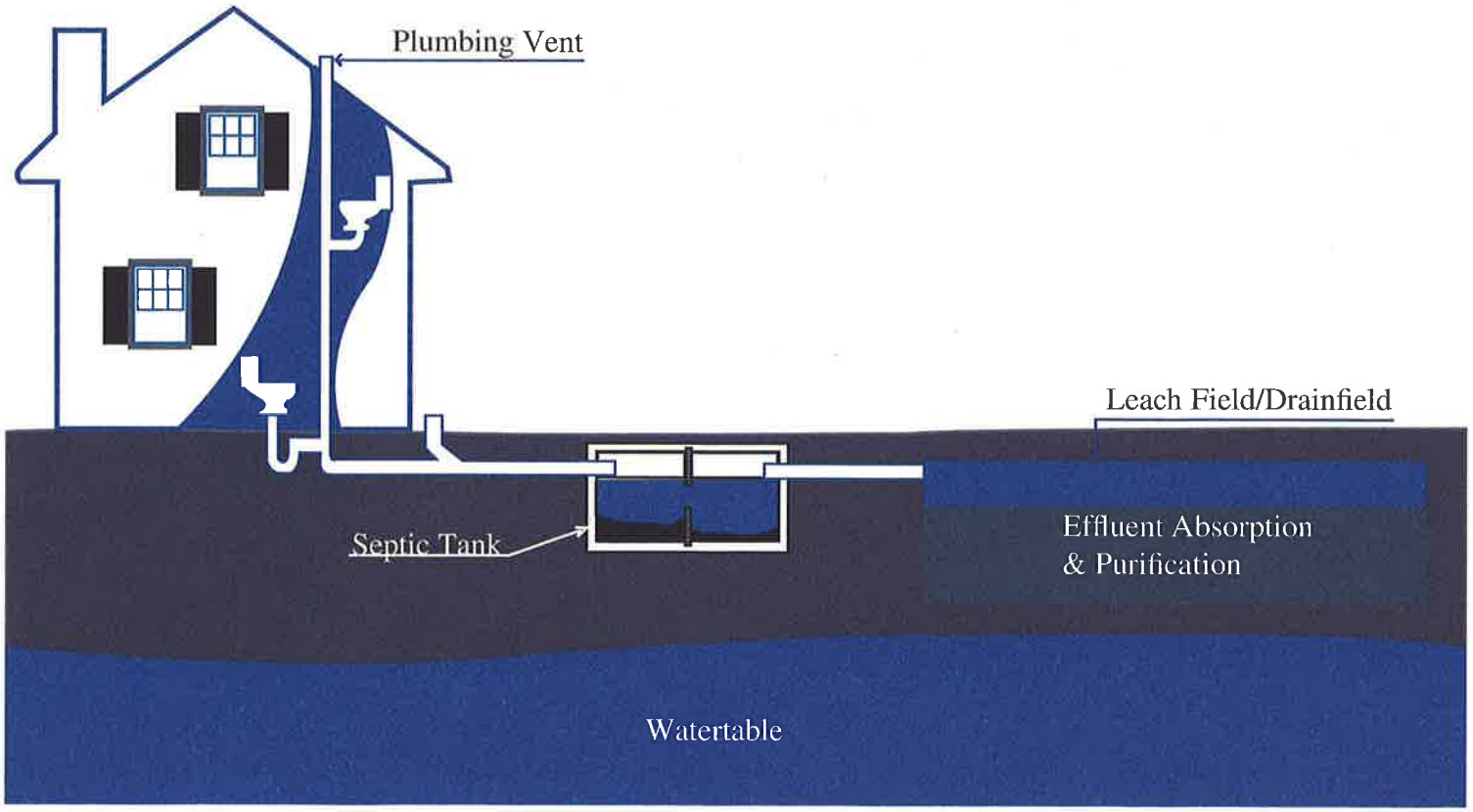
The septic tank provides the first step in treatment. Its primary purpose is to protect the drainfield or other system components from becoming clogged by solids suspended in the wastewater. The wastewater is discharged from the home directly into the tank where the heavier solids settle to the bottom to form a sludge layer and lighter solids, greases, and oils float to the top to form a scum layer.



The septic tank also digests or breaks down the waste solids. Micro-organisms that thrive without oxygen feed on the solids to reduce the volume of sludge and scum. Only about 40 percent of the sludge and scum volume can be reduced in this manner however, so the tank must be pumped regularly to remove the accumulated solids. If the tank is not pumped regularly, it will fill with sludge and the solids will be washed out into the drainfield where they will quickly clog the soil. This may require significant cost to repair or replace. During the treatment process, gases are produced which must be vented from the tank either through the plumbing vent on your building's roof or through other system vents.

Effluent Disposal Area (Leach Field)

The effluent disposal area is the place where the liquid flowing from the septic tank (called effluent) is treated and returned to the groundwater. The leach field must be placed on permeable, dry soil. Rules generally specify a vertical separation between the bottom of the leaching area and the water table, bedrock, or other limiting factors. Horizontal separation distances to wells, streams, and other features are prescribed in the rules as well. When these are maintained, the soil will act as a biological filter and treatment unit, removing pathogenic (harmful) bacteria and viruses from the effluent stream, recycling the wastewater safely to the water table.



ter Treatment System

Taking Care of Your System

Your on-site wastewater treatment system represents a significant investment which you will want to protect. With proper operation and regular maintenance, your system will function better and last longer.

Do not wait until your system shows signs of failure to have your septic tank pumped out. It is recommended that you have your system inspected annually by a professional and have the tank pumped at least every three years. While your tank is being pumped, ask the operator to examine the inlet and outlet baffles or tees in the septic tank. If either is broken, have repairs done immediately. The inlet should also be checked to see if wastewater is continuously flowing into the tank from previously undetected plumbing leaks. The outlet baffle is more important than the inlet baffle. Its loss will allow untreated material to go directly to the absorption area; failure of the system is the common result. If there is a tank filter, it should be cleaned at this time.

Septic systems generally give little warning that they are about to fail. However, the following symptoms often indicate that the leaching system is becoming clogged: a) sewage odor near the septic tank or leaching area; b) slowly running drains and toilets; and c) sewage on the ground over the leaching area.

Protect the system by keeping the soil over the drainfield covered with vegetation to prevent erosion. Maintain the natural shape of the land immediately down slope of the system and protect this area from cutting and filling. Landscape the yard to divert surface waters away from the tank and drainfield.

DO

- Conserve water to reduce the amount of wastewater that must be treated by the system.
- Only discharge human waste into the system. Biodegradable does not mean flushable.
- Keep your septic tank cover accessible for regular tank inspections and pumping. Depending upon the tank depth, a riser (or manhole) over the tank may be necessary to provide easy access for inspections and pumping.
- Have your septic tank pumped regularly and checked for leaks and cracks. Tanks should be pumped at least once every three years. Keep a schedule and a record of past and future inspections and pumping. (Use the chart on the back cover.)
- Be sure that water from the roof, gutters, and foundation drains does not flow over or into the system.
- Call a septic professional at the first sign of a problem.
- Keep deep-rooted trees and bushes away from the leaching system.
- Restrict use of a garbage grinder/disposal. Instead, compost kitchen waste or dispose of it in the trash. Waste from garbage grinders can fill your septic tank more rapidly, requiring more frequent pumping, but will also float and increase the scum blanket thickness.
- Minimize your use of chlorine bleach and other harsh cleansers or solvents.
- Eliminate "wash day" and spread loads throughout the week instead.
- Install low-flow toilets and other water-saving appliances.

DON'T

- Flush cigarette butts, cotton swabs, cat box litter, sanitary napkins, tampons, applicators, disposable diapers or wipes, condoms, medicines, and other like products into your system.
- Poison your system by dumping solvents, oils, paints, thinners, disinfectants, pesticides, or poisons down the drain which can kill beneficial bacteria that help purify sewage and which can contaminate groundwater.
- Dig into your drainfield or build anything over it.
- Plant anything over your drainfield except grass.
- Drive over your drainfield or compact the soil in any way.
- Empty large quanities of water from items such as hot tubs or spas into the septic system, particularly if they are chlorinated.
- Put in a separate pipe to carry wash waters to a side ditch or woods. The graywater contains germs that can spread disease.
- Wait for signs of failure.
- Attempt to repair a failing system yourself. Hire an experienced septic system contractor. A repair permit may be needed from your local health department.
- Cover the septic tank or drainfield with asphalt or concrete.
- Discharge water treatment backflush/sump pumps into the system.

System Maintenance Record

Date	Work Done

Sketch System Layout Here

This folder was developed and printed by:
Granite State Designers and Installers Association / www.GSDIA.org

This copy provided by....

This folder is printed using soy-based ink on recycled paper containing 50% or more post-consumer waste.