

1992 Elger Bay Rd, PMB 507
Camano Island, WA 98282

Office: (360) 387-1731
Fax: (360) 925-3060
Email: contact@envirotekwa.com
Web: envirotekwa.com

SEPTIC SYSTEM DO & DON'T

Septic systems can be very costly if not properly maintained and by following some simple guidelines you can even extend the life of your system.

DO:

- Conserve water
- Space out laundry days
- Fix leaky sinks, toilets or shower fixtures
- Keep lint trap clean in clothes washer
- Substitute harsh detergents and cleaners with friendlier products
- Use liquid detergents instead of powder
- Know where your septic system components are
- Keep a copy of your asbuilt on file
- Take immediate action if an alarm sounds or sewage is surfacing
- Pump your septic tank regularly
- Have your septic system inspected and maintained annually
- Keep your service provider information on file

DON'T:

- Use excessive amounts of water
- Flush cleaners, chemicals or medicines down toilet
- Use septic "additives"
- Use garbage disposals
- Dispose of grease, condoms, tampons, etc. down the toilet
- Turn off the power to your septic system, use to silence switch
- Allow people or animals to come in contact with your sewage
- Landscape, dig, concrete over, build deck or put fence posts in or on your septic system
- Direct gutters, downspouts or surface water toward any part of the septic system
- Discharge water softeners or hot tubs into the septic system
- Drive on any part of your septic system

For additional information please give us a call (360) 387-1731 or email to contact@envirotekwa.com

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SEPTIC SYSTEM FAQ'S

- 1) What is a septic system?
- 2) How long do they last?
- 3) What is a reserve area?
- 4) How do I know when to pump my tank?
- 5) How much will it cost to pump my tank?
- 6) What does the alarm mean?
- 7) How much will it cost to replace my system?
- 8) What the deal with septic inspections?

1) What is a septic system?

A septic system is a mixture of components and soil to treat human waste and greywater before it reaches our drinking water, aquifers, and water-ways.

2) How long do they last?

Most septic systems should last 20 years. This can be extended by 10 or more years with proper maintenance and pumping.

3) What is a reserve area?

Reserve area is a protected location that was designated (unless prior to 80's) for a new drainfield when the primary one fails.

4) How do I know when to pump my tank?

A septic tank ready to be pumped when it reaches 1/3 the working volume in solids (scum & sludge) and this is determined by your local service provider during an inspection. Pumping is typically every 3-5 years

5) How much will it cost to pump a septic tank?

A septic tank usually is 750 – 1000 gallons and it costs \$365 up to 1000 gallons.

6) What does the alarm mean?

If your septic system has an alarm then this indicates the waste levels are too high and in danger of backing up into the house. Call your trusted full service septic company within 24 hrs.

7) How much will it cost to replace my system?

This is more complicated because of all the variables but ranges from gravity to pretreatment and ranges from \$3500 - \$20,000.

8) What's the deal with septic inspection?

A septic inspection is a review of the entire septic system which came about by way of a Washington State Law passed in July 2007. This regulation was due to the hazards human waste has on our environment, public health and shellfish harvesting when septic fail. Unfortunately your sewage does not stay on your property when it fails, it travels by way of stormwater, ditches, aquifers, etc. NOT all inspectors are created equal! We discover through our thorough inspection that previous inspectors do a "fly-by" review and miss a lot of important elements to keep the system working.

Choosing the right landscaping options to go over or around your septic system is important to ensure you achieve the maximum number of years from your system by keeping roots out. **IMPORTANT:** Keep your tank(s) and drainfield components accessible for pumping, inspection and maintenance.

BEST GROUND COVER

- Grass

OTHER ACCEPTABLE COVER

- Ornamental grasses
- Kinnickinick
- Carpet heathers
- Periwinkle
- Bunchberry
- Chameleon

NOT ACCEPTABLE COVER

- Trees
- Shrubs
- Bamboo
- Deep rooted plants
- Decks
- Concrete



Root intrusion into tank

Found too late & caused riser damage & expensive repairs



Root intrusion into Drainfield

Caused failure in gravity system (4" line) and replacement was necessary



Root intrusion into Drainfield

Caused sewage backup and overflow in pressurized system (1.25" line) (see tree's in background)



Root intrusion into Drainfield

See how roots grew through the holes in the 4" pipe



Creative septic tank covers

Metal covers still allow access to lids for service.



Creative septic tank cover

See the green lid under the metal cover

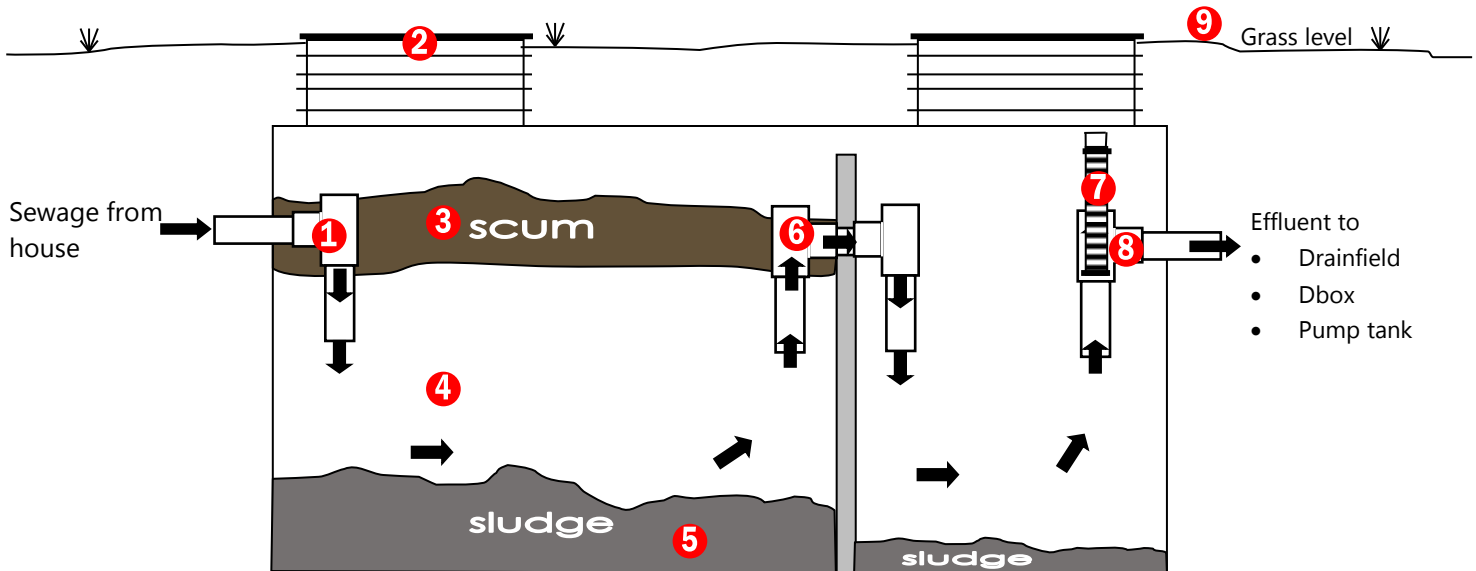
****This is not concrete; these are pavers and they can be removed by a landscaper.***

Keep all deep rooted plants, trees, shrubs at least 30 feet away from septic components. Nothing will stop roots from penetrating pipe, tanks, dboxes or drainfields to reach a water supply.

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Septic Tank (1000 Gal)



- 1) **Inlet baffle** – flows & solids are directed down into the clear zone so there is little disruption to the scum mat and allows for proper separating zones
- 2) **Riser & Lid** – A riser and lid covers the access points of the septic tank and are brought to grade for easy servicing. Important for cleaning and inspecting
- 3) **Scum mat** – this mat consists of floating solids like fats, oils, grease and toilet paper
- 4) **Clear zone** – the clear zone is mostly liquid and little solids that flow to the second compartment or if single compartment tank it will go directly to a dbox or drainfield.
- 5) **Sludge** – this is the heavier solids like organic material such as food scraps, turds, etc. and along with the scum mat will need to be emptied to prevent clogging of baffles and proper biological digestion
- 6) **Cross-over baffle** – this allows the liquid to flow over keeping solids in the first compartment so the outlet filter does not clog easily
- 7) **Outlet filter** – this filter helps prevent solids from exiting the tank to the drainfield that can cause system failure
- 8) **Outlet baffle** – this baffle helps prevent solids from exiting the tank to the drainfield
- 9) **Ground cover** – keeping landscaping, grass, decks, etc from covering the access lids will be your part in helping maintain the septic system