

DO YOUR PART BE SEPTIC SMART



YOUR SEPTIC IS PART OF YOUR HOME AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Don't wait until you have issues with your septic system. Protect your home investment and avoid costly replacement.

- Have your on-site sewage management system inspected by Council.
- Ensure that your Council Approval to Operate a sewage management system is up to date.
- Protect your system - follow these top 10 ways to be a good septic owner.

1. Learn the location, layout and maintenance requirements of your on-site sewage management system

2. Have your system de-sludged when necessary, generally every three to five years.

3. Avoid putting bleaches, disinfectants, whiteners, nappy soakers and spot cleaners in large quantities down the drain.

4. Discard non-degradable products in the bin (e.g. nappies, disposable wipes, sanitary products, personal items) instead of flushing them.

5. Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the disposal area and tank.

6. Follow the system manufacturer's directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives.

7. Repair leaks and use water efficient fixtures to avoid overloading the system.

8. Keep the grass on your disposal area mowed and keep stock and other animals off it.

9. Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low- or phosphate-free.

10. Have your septic system inspected by Council every two, five or eight years according to the risk classification allocated by Council.



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DONTS

OF YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

DO

- Learn the location, layout, operational and maintenance requirements of your system.
- Have your septic tank de-sludged by a licenced contractor every 3-5 years.
- Ensure that your Council approval to operate a sewage management system inspection is current.
- Keep septic tank and inspection openings accessible.
- Use water efficiently.
- Fix household leaks.
- Check household products for suitability for use in septic systems.
- Dispose of all non-degradable products in the in the rubbish bin.
- Construct and maintain stormwater diversion drains upslope of your disposal area.
- Level any depressions with good quality top soil.
- Only plant grass on the disposal area and keep the grass regularly mowed.
- Fence your disposal area and keep animals, children and vehicles out.
- Stagger the use of water generating appliances.
- Consider installing water efficient fixtures and fittings.
- Have your AWTs serviced quarterly (every 3 months) by a qualified service technician.

DONT

- Pour grease, fats or harmful chemicals including bleaches, disinfectants, whiteners and nappy soakers down your sink.
- Allow any foreign materials such as nappies, disposable wipes, sanitary products or any other personal items to be flushed down the toilet.
- Allow vehicles to drive on to or park on your disposal field.
- Allow stock to graze on your disposal field.
- Plant large trees on or near your disposal field.
- Plant any consumable foods on or near your disposal field.
- Allow children or pets to play on your disposal field.
- Allow wastewater to pond or flow onto the grounds surface.
- Irrigate any consumable foods with the wastewater.
- Shock load your system by using your dishwasher, shower or bath and washing machine at the same time.



CONVENTIONAL SEPTIC SYSTEMS

WHAT IS A CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM?

A conventional system typically consists of a septic tank and transpiration bed or trench.

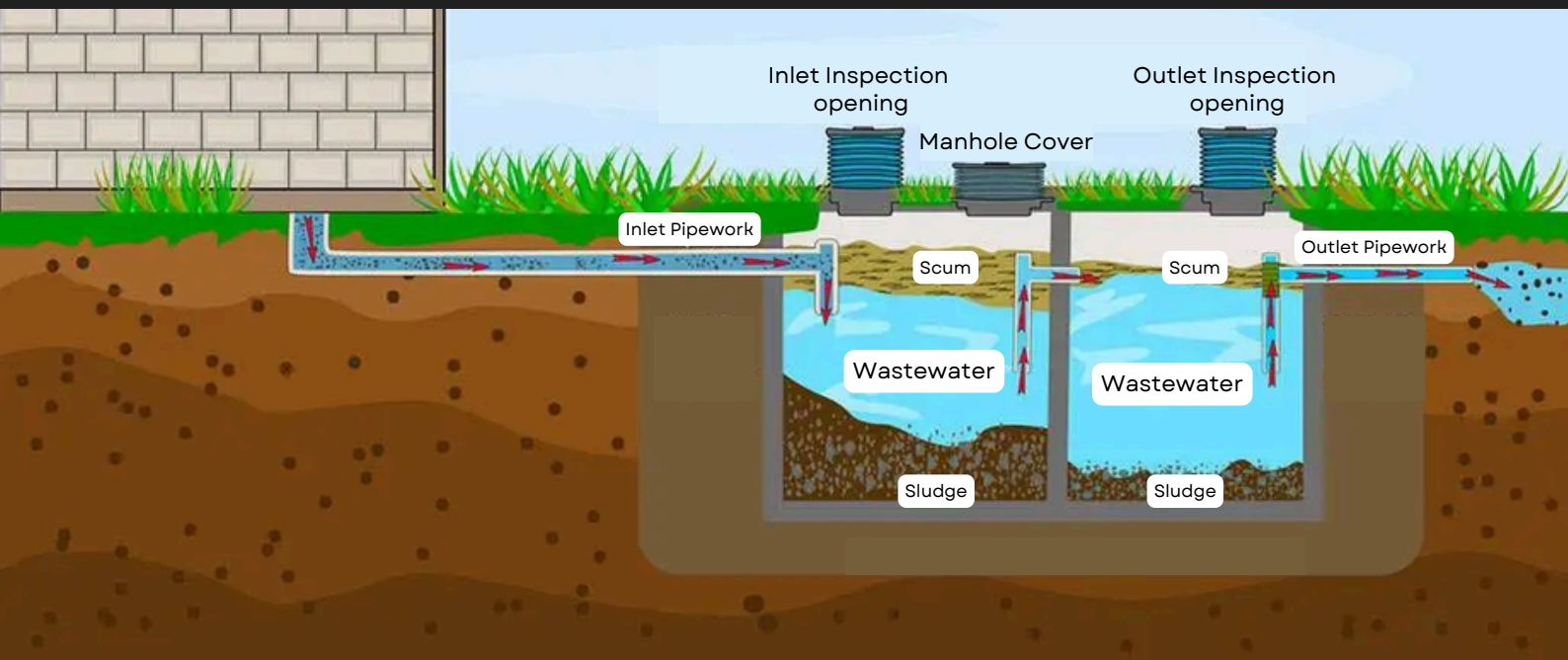
HOW DOES A SEPTIC TANK WORK?

A septic tank is a structurally sound watertight tank. All wastewater from a household enters the septic tank where primary treatment of the wastewater occurs through the settling of solids and the floatation of fats and greases. Most of the solids settle to the bottom of the tank and are retained in the tank forming a sludge layer, whilst fats and greases collect at the top in a scum layer.

Bacteria in the septic tank break down the solid matter in the sludge and scum layers. Material that cannot be fully broken down gradually builds up in the tank and must be pumped out by a licenced contractor periodically.

WHAT IS A TRANSPIRATION BED/TRENCH?

Wastewater that has been treated in a septic tank can only be applied to the land through a covered soil absorption or transpiration system, as the effluent is still too contaminated for above ground or near surface irrigation. The effluent flows through perforated pipes into a lined gravel bed, covered with turf. The water is removed by evaporation and transpiration through the grasses.



AERATED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM (AWTS)

WHAT IS AN AWTS?

An AWTS is a purpose built system used for the treatment of wastewater using both aerobic and anaerobic bacteria.

HOW DOES AN AWTS WORK?

An AWTS consists of one or two tanks which contain a series of chambers. Wastewater enters the first chamber and solids settle to the bottom to form a sludge layer. The scum layer, containing fats and greases collects at the top of the chamber and the partially clarified wastewater flows in to the second chamber.

In the second chamber the wastewater is aerated and treated further by biological activity. A third chamber allows additional clarification through the settling of any remaining solids. The treated effluent is finally disinfected (usually with chlorine tablets) before disposal via an approved method such as spray irrigation or subsurface drip irrigation can take place.

IT IS THE OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT:

- Their AWTS is serviced quarterly by a qualified service technician and any repairs to the system recommended by the technician are undertaken promptly.
- Warning signs are displayed within the effluent disposal area.
- The location of any sprinklers (where approved) comply with the buffer distance requirements specified by council.
- Power is maintained to the system at all times.
- The high water and air alarms for the system are functioning.

