



Care and Maintenance of your leach line sewage treatment system

**Clermont County
Public Health**
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Fact Sheet

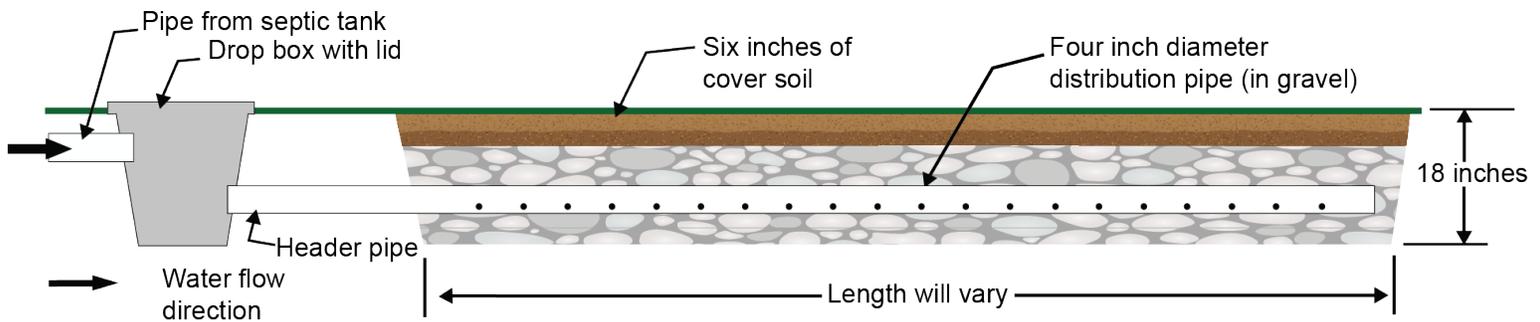
Your system includes:

- a clean-out, inside or outside the basement wall
- a building sewer to move wastewater from the house
- a septic tank
- connecting pipelines
- leach lines (with gravel, or with gravel-less devices)
- some type of distribution device(s): drop-boxes (for serial distribution), a distribution (splitter) box, or earthen dams

Your system may also include:

- a septic tank effluent filter
- a dosing tank with a pump
- a dosing tank with water alarm
- a curtain (gradient) drain with a gravity outlet
- a curtain (gradient) drain with a collection sump and pump
- electrical safety device for pumps (breaker lock-out or disconnect box)

Inside of a septic tank, solid waste is separated from liquid waste. Once the liquid waste has been treated, it moves through pipes into the leach lines. A leach line is an underground pipe with small holes in it that allow the wastewater to leave the pipe and enter the soil. As the treated water enters the drain field, the soil acts as a filter, further cleaning the wastewater.



Tank Care

Live bacteria in the septic tank feed on the solid waste and help break it down. Some household chemicals can kill the bacteria in the septic tank. A tank without bacteria can not break down and decompose the solid waste, which can cause the system to fail or result in higher maintenance costs.

In-sink garbage disposals should not be used in a home with a septic system. When garbage disposals are used, it will require more frequent septic tank pumping.

Avoid additives and products that claim to dissolve tank solids.

Keep these out of your septic tank:

- drain cleaners
- large amounts of bleach
- disinfectant cleaners
- antibacterial soap
- cigarette butts
- food waste
- cooking oil and grease
- pet waste
- cat litter
- plastic
- paper products (other than toilet paper)

Don't put anything into your septic system that has not gone through your body first.



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Septic tank maintenance tips

1. Have your septic tank pumped out by a registered septage hauler every three to five years, or as needed. Keep a record of how frequently your system is pumped and any other maintenance that is performed.
2. Check all the parts of your system to make sure they are working properly.
 - Check for pump operation and test the high water alarm.
 - Check the pump circuit breakers.
 - Check the condition of the wiring and connections near the pumps.

Replacements or repairs should be done by a qualified person and inspected by the Clermont County Building Inspections Department for proper electrical grounding.

3. Do not overload your leach line system with extra water.
 - Repair any leaking faucets or toilets.
 - Use water-saving appliances and fixtures.
 - Take short showers and spread out your laundry throughout the week to avoid overloading the system.
4. Divert surface and ground water away from your system. Extra water will add to the load on the system. Eliminate standing water over the leach lines by filling in low spots when the ground is dry. Maintain curtain (gradient) drain outlets to carry excess water away.
5. Keep a good stand of grass over your leach lines and mow the area regularly during the growing season.
6. Protect your system from damage.
 - Replace any broken or missing lids.
 - Don't drive or park over any part of the system.
 - Don't build driveways or buildings over the system.
 - Don't plant gardens, bushes or trees on septic tank or over the leach lines.
 - Don't allow livestock to graze or pets to dig in the system area.
 - Don't dig near your system without making sure that it is safe.
 - Request an inspection by Public Health before you begin work on any improvement such as a room addition, in-ground pool, barn or garage.
7. Look for signs of failure. These can all be signs your system is not working:
 - sewage on surface of ground
 - slow toilets or drains, sewage backup into the house
 - strong sewage odors inside or outside
 - sewage surfacing in your yard or flowing to a nearby drainage way

If your system is showing signs that it is not working, call an onsite wastewater professional. These conditions must be corrected to prevent a health threat to your family and neighbors.

8. Rest your leach lines. Leach lines can be rested by blocking the flow of sewage to them. While one line is blocked, the waste water can still flow to the other lines. Some leach line systems have drop boxes with lids to provide access for plugging individual leach lines.

Protect your investment Proper care and routine maintenance of your system will extend its useful life.

