INSIDE:

Limit the use of household chemicals. Constant use of bleach, lyes, soaps, and strong detergents or drain cleaners may reduce bacteria action and cause rapid accumulation of sludge and eventual clogging of the leach field.

Wipe greasy dishes with paper before washing to decrease the amount of grease and soap curd entering the system.

Use a sink strainer with mesh fine enough to retain coffee grounds. Limit the use of your garbage disposal.

Use a lint filter on your clothes washer.

Regularly check plumbing fixtures. A leaking toilet can add up to 1,000 gallons of water each day to your system.

Keep pumping and service records on the premises, regardless of change of ownership.

Don't dispose of facial tissue, sanitary napkins, cigarette butts, tampons, paper towels and excessive amounts of toilet paper into the septic system. These items will not degrade in the tank and may clog inlet & outlet pipes.

Don't clean paint brushes or dispose of paint in your septic system. Latex-based paint will clog sewer pipes and coat the soil in your leach field. Oil-based paints are toxic and will diminish the bacteriological action taking place in the tank.

OUTSIDE:

Inspect your tank each year.

Plant grass over the leach field. However do not plant shrubs or trees as roots can damage sewer pipes and may lead to shifting and settling in the field.

OUTSIDE continued:

Don't use anti-freeze or kerosene to thaw a frozen tank. These items will kill the bacteria in the tank and coat the soil in the leach field, thus increasing the chance of sealing off the flow of liquid into the soil. The recommended method of thawing a tank is with a stock tank heater or septic tank heater.

Don't wash or disinfect the tank after pumping.

Don't allow large equipment, automobiles, or large animals on any part of your septic system.

Don't place sprinkler systems close to or on the leach field. All surface run off should be diverted away from the field to prevent saturation of the soil.

City of Winder
83 West May Street
P.O. Box 566
Winder, GA 30680
770-867-7978
www.cityofwinder.com

YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM SYSTEM

"7"

Seven Homeowner Responsibilities

Care and maintenance of your Individual Sewage Disposal System

You , the homeowner, are responsible for the care and maintenance of your Individual Sewage Disposal System (ISDS). With reasonable use and periodic maintenance, your system should last a long time. Here are seven things you should do to insure your system remains in good working order:

1.) Do regular pumping of the septage from the septic tank.

2.) Locate the tank riser (septic tank lid) and keep it marked.

3.) Understand how the system operates, including knowing what the minimum maintenance requirements are for your particular design.

4.) Respond to a failing system with required maintenance, particularly when surfacing of effluent occurs or odors are present.

5.) Do not dispose of hazardous household wastes in the septic system.

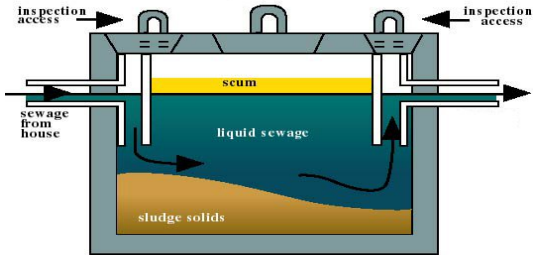
6.) Recognize the value to the property by having a well- maintained system.

7.) Keep records of the system design, location and maintenance activities including pumping dates.

The Septic Tank

The function of a septic tank is to separate solids and liquids in sewage. This is primarily a physical process of settling, although a considerable amount of biological decomposition does occur.

When wastes enter the first compartment of a septic tank, solids settle to the bottom and form *sludge*. Grease and hair float to the top and become a layer of *scum*. The middle layer, mostly liquid, flows into the second compartment where the process repeats itself. Finally, the remaining liquid goes into the leach (absorption) field.



Septic tanks should be cleaned before too much sludge or scum is allowed to accumulate. For a full time residence, the tank should be pumped every 2-4 years. It all depends on what you put down your septic tank. *(Check the list of Do's and Don'ts on the back of this brochure.)* If either the sludge or scum approaches too close to the bottom of the outlet device, solids will be scoured into the leach field and will cause clogging. When this happens, effluent no longer filters through the solid and will eventually break through the ground surface, and sewage may back up into the plumbing fixtures. When a leach field is clogged in this manner, it is not only essential to clean the tank, but it may be necessary to construct a new leach field.

Although it is an unpleasant task, a yearly inspection of the solid accumulation is the only way to determine when a tank needs pumping.
CAUTION: DO NOT ENTER THE TANK AT ANY TIME. SEPTIC TANKS CONTAIN GASES WHICH CAN BE FATAL IF INHALED.

- First, locate and remove the lid to the first compartment of the tank.
- Second, make a hole in the scum layer so you have access to the liquid below.
- Third, cover a long stick with a rough, white cloth and lower it into the bottom of the tank .

Pull the stick straight out. You will see 2 distinct discolorations on the cloth. The lowest will be the sludge line and the other the total capacity of the tank. The sludge line should be no more than 1/3 of the total capacity of the tank. If more than 1/3, the tank should be pumped.

Phone: 770-867-7978 Fax: 770-307-0944
E-mail: angela.page@cityofwinder.com