

## Your Septic System Record

System Installation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Installer: \_\_\_\_\_

Installer's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Tank Size: \_\_\_\_\_ gallons

Capacity: \_\_\_\_\_ # bedrooms

### Septic Maintenance Records

Date of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Work Done: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Work Done: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor: \_\_\_\_\_

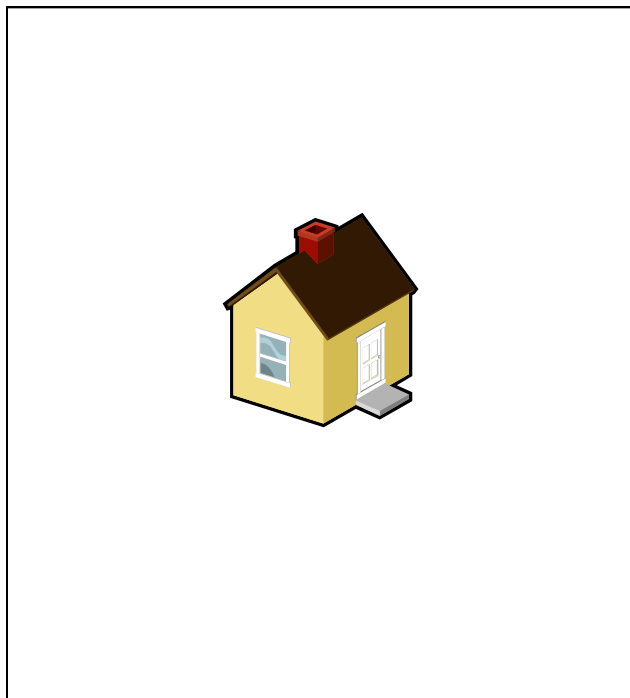
Company Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Work Done: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Draw a sketch of where your septic system is located so that it can be easily found by a septic contractor during service visits.



**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Botetourt County: (540) 473-8240

**MOUNTAIN CASTLES  
SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

36 Executive Circle, Suite 1

Roanoke, VA 24012

Phone: (540) 400-0707

Email: [mountaincastlesswcd@gmail.com](mailto:mountaincastlesswcd@gmail.com)

Website: [www.mountaincastles.org](http://www.mountaincastles.org)

## Care of Your Septic System

A failed septic system is expensive to repair and pollutes the waterways. Protect your investment and local streams by practicing the helpful hints found in this pamphlet.



We work with the people who work the land.

In partnership with the

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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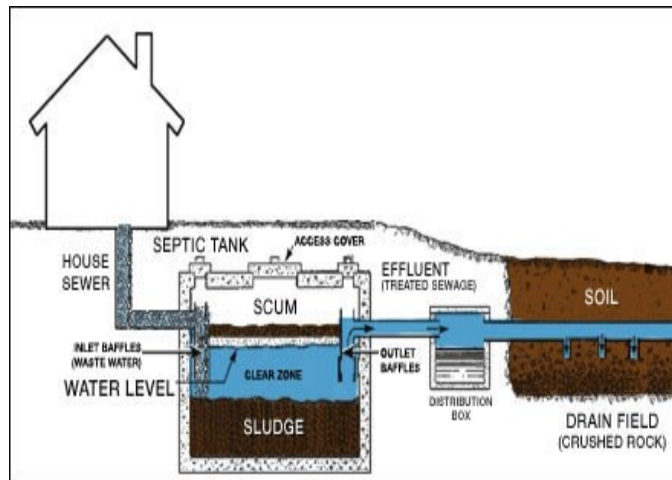
## Helpful Hints to Prolong the Life of Your Septic System:

- Get the septic tank pumped out every 3 to 5 years by a licensed septic contractor.
- Only plant grass over the septic system and drainfield. Roots from trees, shrubs, and plants can damage the system.
- Avoid driving over or parking on the drainfield to prevent damage to the pipes.
- Do your laundry throughout the week instead of all on one day so that the septic tank doesn't become overloaded. Use liquid detergent as powder detergent can clog your septic system.
- **Do not use toilets or drains as trash cans!** Do not flush or dump grease, paint, tissues, paper towels, feminine hygiene products, condoms, diapers, hair, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, or cat litter.
- Use of garbage disposal is **NOT** recommended. Garbage disposal usage increases pumping frequency to every 1-2 years.
- Divert roof drains and surface water from driveways and hillsides away from the septic system. Keep sump pump outlets and house footing drains diverted away from the system as extra water can overwhelm the drainfield.
- Using septic tank additives, such as Rid-X is **NOT** recommended. These products usually do not help and may **hurt a system** in the long run.
- Dispose of gasoline, oil, paint thinner, pesticides, and antifreeze at the appropriate waste disposal centers instead of down the drain.

## How does a septic system work?

When water and waste exit your home, they take the following path:

Into the septic tank → sludge sinks to the bottom → grease, fats, and oil float to the top → water exits the tank into the distribution box → several pipes distribute the water into the gravel drainfield → water trickles through the gravel before entering the soil → bacteria in the soil digest and remove most of the contaminants from the wastewater before it reaches groundwater



## Follow these tips to help locate your septic tank:

- If you can't locate the tank from your own records, contact your local Health Department to obtain a sketch of your septic system and its location on your property.
- Legally, septic tanks are supposed to be located more than 5 feet from the dwelling foundation. The tank is usually in front of the location where the sewer line (usually a 4" pipe) exits the dwelling (usually from the basement or crawl space underneath your house).

## Why should I maintain my septic system?

- A leaking septic system can send sewage into the groundwater, which provides your home's drinking water. This results in disease-causing bacteria contaminating your water, putting you and your household at risk of illness.
- A properly functioning septic system can increase the value of your home.
- A malfunctioning system can cause sewage to backup into your house.
- Sewage building up on the ground surface washes into local streams and can kill aquatic wildlife.

## Signs of Septic Failure:

- Sewage pooling on top of the ground surface
- Sewage back-ups into the house
- Strong odor coming from the drainfield
- Slow-draining tubs, sinks, and toilets
- Grass over the drainfield that is brighter and healthier than surrounding grass, even in dry weather

## Compare costs:

\$300—400 to have your septic system inspected and tank pumped every 3-5 years

vs.



\$7,000 or more to have it



repaired or replaced.