

# Know Your Septic System's Function and Maintenance

Household wastewater contains bacteria, viruses, nutrients, solids, and cleaners that need to be treated by your on-site sewage treatment system!

## Household Plumbing

### Function

- Collects used water
- Delivers wastewater to septic tank

### Basic Management Practices

- Control water use—repair leaks, use low water use appliances and fixtures.
- Don't overload the system—spread water usage throughout the day and week.
- Minimize use of harsh cleaners, bleach, soaps and detergents.
- Do not dispose of paints, medications, or chemicals through your septic system.
- Keep grease, lint, food, feminine hygiene, and plastic products out of septic system.

## Septic Tank

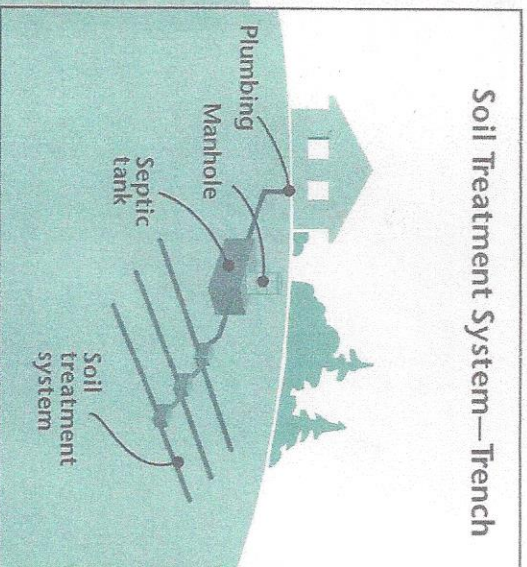
### Function

- Separates solids from liquid
- Friendly bacteria decompose organic solids
- Stores other solids until removed by pumping
- Delivers liquid to soil treatment area

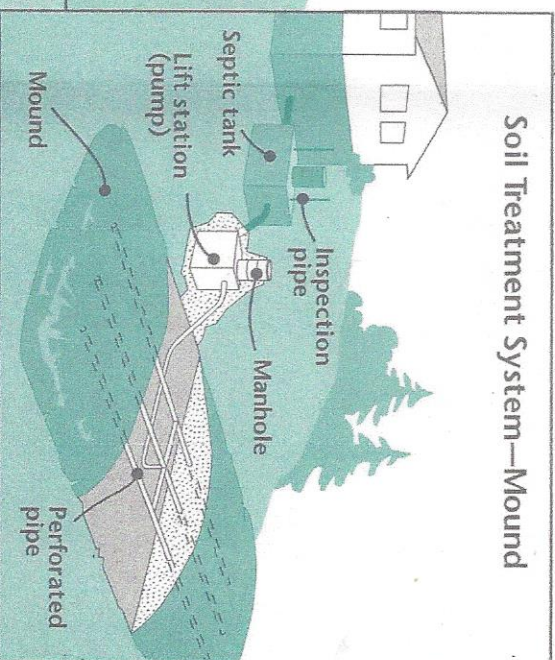
### Basic Management Practices

- Pump/clean solids from tank regularly.
- Do not use septic tank additives for maintenance.
- Always clean the tank through the manhole.
- Inspect baffles at time of cleaning.
- Never enter the septic tank.

## Soil Treatment System—Trench



## Soil Treatment System—Mound



## Soil Treatment System (typically an in-ground trench or mound)

### Function

- Kills bacteria, viruses, and other disease organisms
- Removes phosphorous and other nutrients
- Reduces nitrate content
- Recycles water into soil
- Water and nutrients enter the ground water, evaporate, or are used by plants

### Basic Management Practices

- Mow but do not fertilize or water turf grasses.
- Keep heavy vehicles (cars, tractors, snowmobiles, etc.) off area.
- Do not place gardens, swing sets, or sand boxes over this area.
- Do not plant trees and shrubs on or close to this area.