

Pump Your Septic Tank!

Why Is Pumping Your Septic Tank Important?

Research has shown that failing septic tank systems contribute to considerable amounts of pollution to groundwater and the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. By having your septic tank pumped before it is full, the number of solids leaving the tank and moving into the drain field is greatly reduced, allowing your drain field to function as designed for a much longer amount of time.

Extend the Life of Your Septic Tank!

- Conserve water to reduce the amount of waste water to be treated.
- Fix leaky faucets, and toilets. If replacing fixtures, replace with low-flow fixtures.
- Stagger your clothes washing over several days, instead of doing all your washing on one day.
- Divert surface water run-off away from your absorption field.
- Know the location of your septic system, for future maintenance, and to visually inspect the soil around the system.
- Have your system inspected every three years.

What NOT to Do!

- Do NOT drive or park over the drainfield area.
- Do NOT plant any trees or shrubs within 30 feet of your septic tank or drainfield.
- Do NOT excessively water the lawn over the drainfield area.
- Do NOT put grease, hygiene products, wipes, paper towels, oil, paint, antifreeze, pesticides, or other strong chemicals down your sink or toilet.

Save Money!

Repairing a damaged or failed septic tank can be costly! By pumping your septic tank, it is easier to catch any issues that are present. Catching issues early can prevent further damage and may make them easier and less costly to fix.



Financial Assistance for Septic Tank Pump-Out

It's the law. The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requires that septic systems be pumped out or inspected at least once every five years. Full financial assistance to comply with this law is available for low-income households. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis until the available grant funding pump-outs are spent.

A Low Income household is defined as one earning 80% or less of the county's median household income. Surry County's median income is \$57,962. If you are a homeowner with a septic system and you believe that your household qualifies for assistance, please fill out the application below and email or mail, with the required proof of income by May 31st, 2022 to septicpumpout@surrycountyva.gov or:

Surry County Department of Planning & Community Development
P.O. Box 357
Surry, VA 23883

Please provide the following:

Household Size: Include the name and age of each person residing in the home.

Income: The first page of the applicant's most recent tax-filing form (Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040-EZ) — OR — a copy of an award letter from Social Security or the Department of Social Services.

Proof of ownership: A copy of the most recent tax bill from the County.

How does a septic system work?

The waste water from a household flows from the house to the septic tank. The tank, which is usually cast of concrete, is the preliminary treatment phase of the system. In the tank, the heavy solids settle to the bottom, while light solids and grease float to the top, forming a scum layer. Naturally-occurring bacteria inside of the tank breakdown the scum layer and solids. As additional waste water enters the tank, the separated waste water in the middle of the tank is forced out (or pumped) into the septic drainfield. The drainfield is a series of perforated pipes that allow the waste water to filter through the soil, and is the secondary and final phase of treatment in a septic system. Here, the waste water percolates through the soil while additional microbes break down smaller particles and harmful disease-causing bacteria.

1. Name: _____

2. Address Where Tank is Located: _____

3. Mailing Address (If Different): _____

4. Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct, and that if, at a later time, it is found not to be so, I will reimburse the state of Virginia for the cost of the pump-out, as well as any legal costs. I understand that my request for assistance is voluntary and that, to qualify, I must provide all the information requested above in addition to a copy of the first page of my most recent tax return.

*** IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** A copy of the first page of your most recent tax return (Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ) or Social Security benefits documentation is required to verify qualification. Income for each member living in the household must be included. Proof of ownership of the property where the septic tank is located must be provided (with a property tax receipt, for example). If the property is not owned by the applicant, then a copy of the lease agreement, or a statement indicating that the applicant is responsible for all maintenance of the property.