

# Maintenance Record

Date:	*Service Performed:	Service Performed by:	Cost:

\*Service must be performed by licensed and certified septic contractors only

## Tips to Avoid Trouble

**DO** have your tank pumped out and system inspected every 3-5 years by a licensed septic tank contractor (list can be obtained from Environmental Health).

**DO** practice water conservation. Repair dripping faucets and leaking toilets, run washing machines and dishwashers only when full, avoid long showers, and use water-saving fixtures.

**DO** learn the location of your septic tank and absorption field and keep a sketch of it handy for service visits.

**DO** divert roof drains and the surface water flowing down driveways and hillsides away from the septic system.

**DO** take leftover hazardous household chemicals to your approved hazardous waste collection center for disposal. Use bleach, disinfectants, and drain and toilet bowl cleaners sparingly and in accordance with product labels.

**DON'T** allow anyone to drive or park over any part of the system or put any foundational structures on drainfields or tank. The area over the absorption field should be left undisturbed with only mowed grass cover. Roots from nearby trees or shrubs may clog and damage your drain lines.

**DON'T** make, or allow to be made, repairs to your septic system without obtaining the required health department permit. Use licensed septic contractors.

**DON'T** use commercial septic tank additives. These products have not been proven to be effective and may damage your system or the environment.

**DON'T** use your toilet as a trash can. No dumping non-biodegradables including diapers, sanitary napkins, chewing gum, cigarette butts, fats, and greases or harmful chemicals down your toilet or drains.

# HOMEOWNER'S SEPTIC SYSTEM GUIDE AND MAINTENANCE RECORD FILE

It is the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain, repair or replace all components of the septic system so that it will protect the environment and public health. Keep all information about your septic system and it's maintenance within this folder. This record will be important should problems develop with your system or if you sell your home. Keep this folder with your house records as a reference for any questions that may arise.

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot/Block: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Septic Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Issued: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Legal Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Installation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Installed by: \_\_\_\_\_

## Household and Septic System Information:

All additions and/or improvements to your home must be approved by Environmental Health so as not to adversely affect the system.

Number of Bedrooms: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Garbage disposal  
 Public water supply  
 Private water supply  
 Hot tub/Jacuzzi

Average Water Consumption: Per Month  
 - 3-Bedroom: 6-8 thousand gallons  
 - 4-Bedroom: 8-10 thousand gallons  
 - 5-Bedroom: 10-12 thousand gallons  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Septic Tank: Number of tanks: \_\_\_\_\_ Capacity (Gallons): \_\_\_\_\_ Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rectangle     One compartment     Concrete     Plastic  
 Round/Oval     Multi-compartment     Fiberglass

Pump Tank: Capacity (Gallons): \_\_\_\_\_ Pump horsepower: \_\_\_\_\_ Grease trap size: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Aerobic Pretreatment Unit Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location of power switch for pump: \_\_\_\_\_

Absorption Field:  
 Pipe and gravel (conventional)     High capacity chamber     Drip irrigation     Beds  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_     Length of field (sq. feet / linear feet) : \_\_\_\_\_

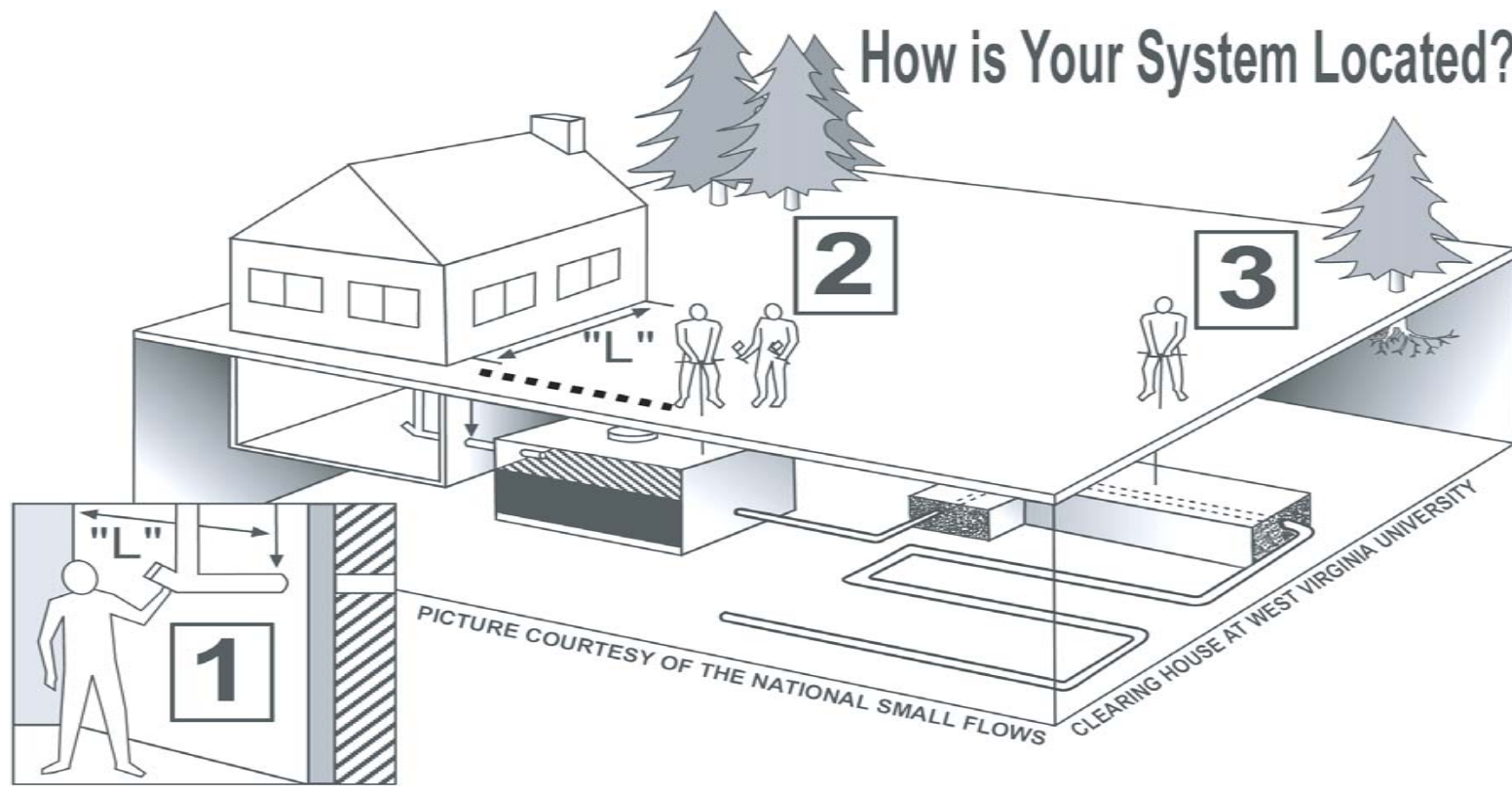
Accessories:  
 Septic effluent filter     Siphon/Pump     Distribution box     High water alarm  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Treatment Components:  
 Biofilter     Disinfection     Constructed wetland     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Special thanks to the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources and the Gwinnett County Board of Health for the use of their folder design and content.



## How is Your System Located?



PICTURE COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL SMALL FLOWS CLEARING HOUSE AT WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

### Step 1

- Check plans of onsite systems, if available.
- Locate sewer pipe from inside the dwelling.
- Measure distance from sewer pipe to corner of outside wall "L".

### Step 2

- Locate sewer pipe from outside the dwelling by measuring distance "L" of the same wall.
- Locate septic tank (should normally be at least 10 feet from dwelling and 1-3 feet below ground surface) by probing area with an insulated metal rod and feeling for resistance. Flag septic tank location.

### Step 3

- Begin searching downslope of septic tank to locate the drainfield. (Note: If system has a pump, drainfield can be upgradient of the septic tank.)
- Probe ground every couple of feet with an insulated probe until you hear metal rod contact gravel or probe is wet (not during rainy season) and flag that point.
- Repeat to locate additional drainfield lines (usually 5-10 feet apart and 50-100 feet in length).

**Caution: There is some danger in locating an onsite system. It is recommended that you contact a professional to assist you in locating your onsite system.**

**Note: Some manufacturers offer electronic transmitters to assist with locating the septic tank. Metal detectors are another possibility.**

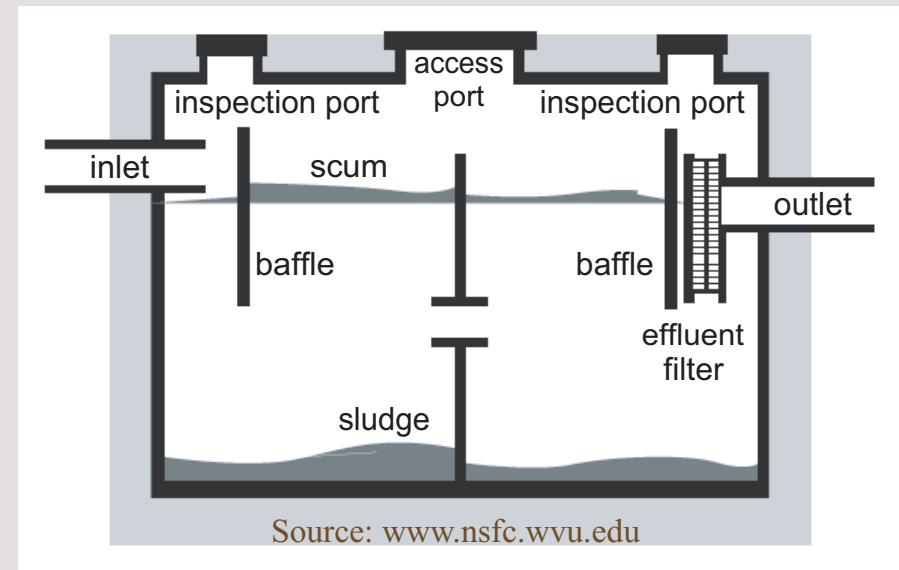
**Caution: When using metal probe, be careful of buried and overhead utility lines!**

### Safety Checklist

- ☑ Never enter the septic tank. Toxic gases are produced by the natural treatment processes in septic tanks and can kill in minutes. Extreme care should be taken when inspecting a septic tank. Never smoke around or near septic tank openings.
- ☑ Electrical lights, appliances, or tools are to be kept away from the septic tank and water or wet ground near the system.
- ☑ Manholes serve the purpose for inspections and cleaning and should be locked or heavy enough to prevent children from opening them. Keep children and other spectators away from the system.
- ☑ Pathogens present in wastewater are also present in the contents of the septic tank. These organisms are capable of spreading infectious disease. Use eye protection and gloves and always wash hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap before eating, drinking, or smoking. Change clothes before coming into contact with food and others after being around an onsite system.
- ☑ When attempting to locate your system, be careful of both overhead and underground utility lines including sprinkler systems. Have all underground utilities located before starting.

## Septic Tank

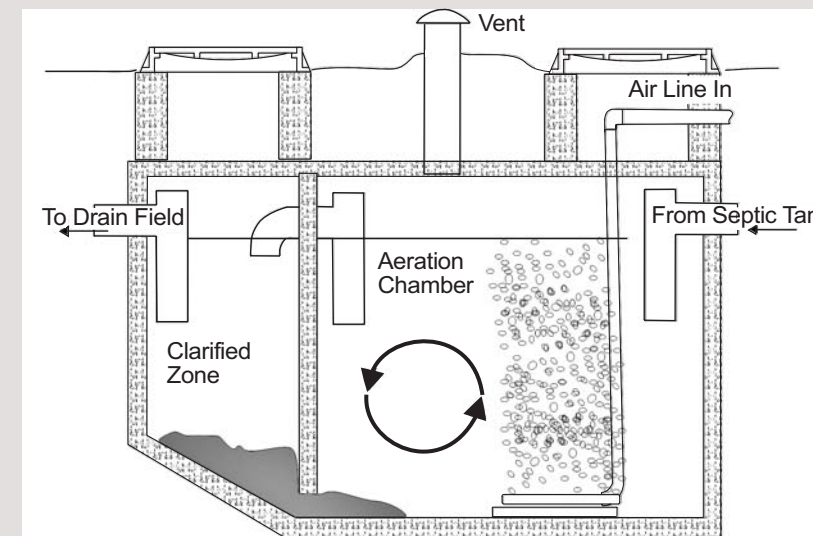
The majority of septic tanks installed in Georgia are two compartment traditional septic tanks. A septic tank is a water tight box made of concrete, fiberglass or plastic. The primary purpose of the septic tank is to separate solids from liquids and promote partial breakdown of the solids by microorganisms naturally present in the wastewater. Wastewater from the home enters the tank through an inlet. In the tank, solids settle to the bottom forming a layer of sludge, where some digestion by the bacteria in wastewater occurs. Wastes lighter than water such as grease and fats float to the top forming a layer of scum. The sludge and scum remain in the tank and should be pumped out periodically. A middle layer of partially clarified wastewater develops between the sludge and scum layers. The clarified wastewater effluent passes out of the tank to the drain field through an outlet device. The effluent filter helps ensure that solids do not reach the drain field where they can cause clogging. As solids accumulate in the septic tank, the effluent filter may become clogged. This is an indication that it is time to have the solids pumped out of the tank and the filter cleaned.



Source: www.nsfrc.wvu.edu

## Aerobic Treatment Unit (ATU)

Aerobic treatment units are stand alone advanced sewage treatment systems, providing wastewater treatment prior to disposal in the subsurface absorption field. Aerobic treatment units (ATUs) provide aerobic biodegradation or decomposition of wastewater constituents by bringing the wastewater into contact with air mechanically. An ATU has additional maintenance needs to ensure that the mechanical / electrical components are working properly. Consult your county environmental health department for recommendations on proper maintenance if you have an ATU system.



## Important Numbers

### Local Health Department:

**Gwinnett County Environmental Health**  
240 West Oak Street, Lawrenceville, GA, 30045  
Phone: (770) 963-5132 Fax: (770) 339-4282

**Barrow County Environmental Health**  
10 West Williams Street, Winder, GA, 30680  
Phone: (770) 307-3502 Fax: (770) 307-3835

### Installer:

Firm/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Certification/Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pumper:

Firm/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Certification/Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Operation & Maintenance Provider:

Firm/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Certification #: \_\_\_\_\_