

Wesley Chin, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Telephone (617) 993-2720
Fascimile (617) 993-2721
wchin@belmont-ma.gov

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

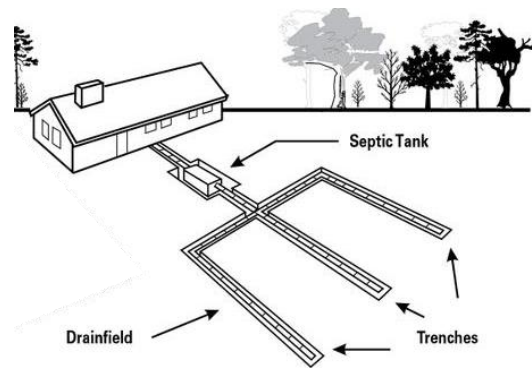


P.O. BOX 56, 19 MOORE STREET
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

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What is a Septic System?

Septic systems are individual underground sewage and wastewater disposal systems. They are usually made up of pipes, the septic tank, and drainfields, though some systems, such as cesspools, are designed differently. When wastewater drains from the home into the septic tank, it is partially treated and any solids settle while oil and grease float to the surface. From there, the remaining wastewater moves into the drainfields where soil microbes continue to process and treat the wastewater as it is absorbed. Always consult a Board of Health



licensed professional when having your septic system inspected, pumped, altered, or repaired.

Why Maintain It?

- Lack of regular maintenance can cause early septic system failure, systems can be very expensive to repair or replace when they fail.
- A malfunctioning septic system can release wastewater to the environment that has not been properly treated, the effects on water quality can have negative environmental and health impacts.

Quick Tips on Maintenance

- Septic systems should be pumped every 3 years, unless you have a garbage disposal unit as well in which case it should be pumped and inspected yearly.
- Make sure to understand your individual system and its location on your property.
- Always utilize a licensed professional for inspection, pumping, and repairs.
- Use bleach, disinfectants, and drain and toilet bowl cleaners sparingly and in accordance with product labels. Do not use septic system additives unless they are approved by MA Department of Environmental Protection.

Additional information can be found from MA Department of Environmental Protection:

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/caring-for-your-septic-system>

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/consumer-protection-tips-septic-system-inspections-and-repairs>

