

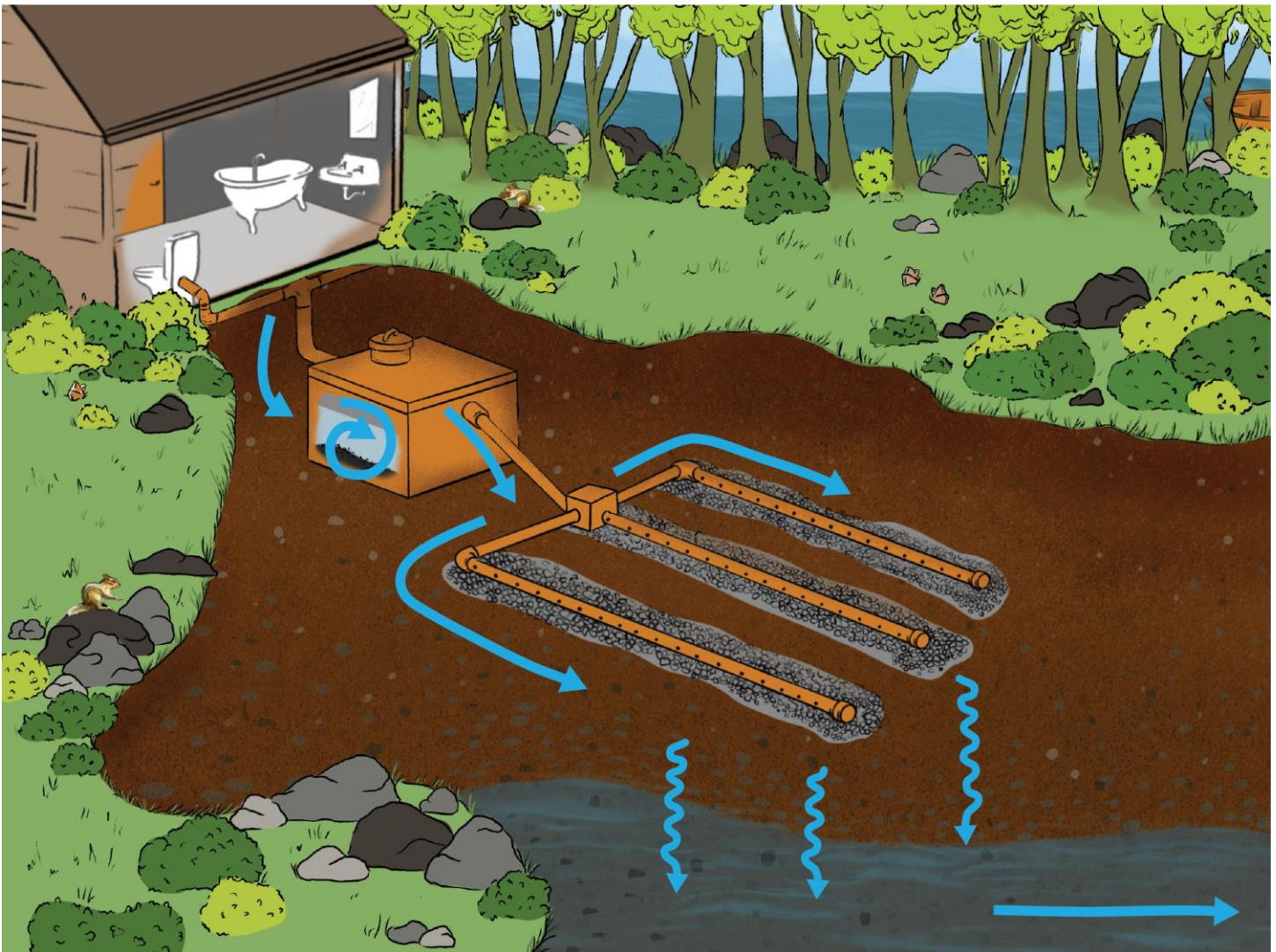


Be LakeSmart Lakes Environmental Association



LakeSmart Tip: Get Pumped!

Untreated effluent that escapes from a failing septic system is a potential source of additional (and unwanted) phosphorus into your lake. Chemicals and other toxins from untreated effluent may also contaminate drinking water wells.



LakeSmart is a program of Maine Lakes (www.lakes.me) run in the Lake Region by the Lakes Environmental Association (www.mainelakes.org). For more information contact Lauren Pickford (207-647-8500 – lauren@mainelakes.org).

Pumping your septic system's tank removes sludge and scum before it builds up and washes into the leach field, compromising or destroying the leach field's capacity to distribute and treat effluent. Untreated effluent may break out of the system, running over the ground and into the lake or flowing directly into groundwater, carrying unwanted nutrients, bacteria and viruses with it. This is not good for you, your pets, your neighbors, your family or your lake.

The major factors affecting the frequency of pumping are the number of people using the system, the total wastewater volume entering the system and septic tank size. It's a good idea to check with your service provider at the time of pumping to see if they think you are on a schedule that fits your tank capacity and volume.

As a general rule of thumb, you should pump your septic system's tank every two to three years for year-round residents and every three to four years for seasonal residents.

Many owners of property used seasonally pump their septic system's tank far less often in the (likely mistaken) belief that their limited seasonal use justifies extending pumping. In fact, most seasonally used properties have at least several weeks of intensive use due to family or guest visits. This intensive use can put great demand on the system's capacity. Regular pumping on a conservative schedule is your best way to assure your system isn't compromised, with a resultant shortening of its useful life. The prorated cost of pumping is a minor cost compared to that of replacing your system.

For more tips on caring for your septic system see <https://cdn.branchcms.com/DrynVOJoIo-1457/docs/Lake%20Library/Septic-two-pager-11x17-FINAL-5.14.21.pdf>.