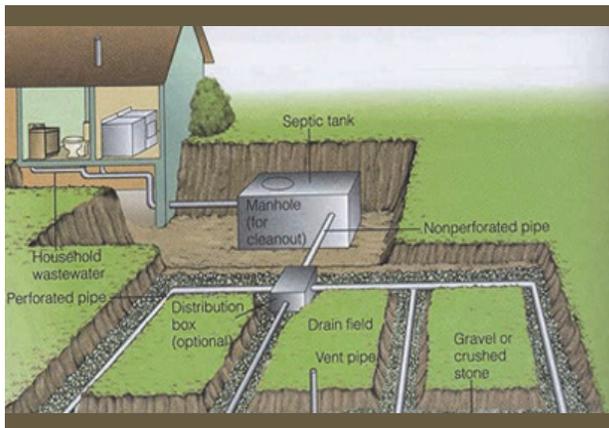




## YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!

Did you know that as a homeowner you're responsible for maintaining your septic system? Did you know that maintaining your septic system protects your investment in your home? Did you know that you should periodically inspect your system and pump out your septic tank?

If properly designed, constructed, and maintained, your septic system can provide long-term, effective treatment of household wastewater. If your septic system is not maintained, you might need to replace it, costing you thousands of dollars. A malfunctioning system can contaminate groundwater that might be a source of drinking water. And if you sell your home, your septic system must be in good working order.



## WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns or would like to request additional information, please contact:

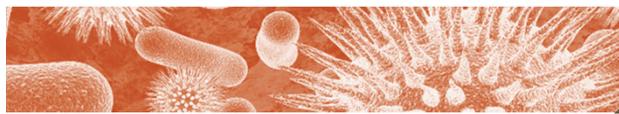
Mrs. Teri Lewis  
Planning & Development  
Director  
City of Rincon  
302 S. Columbia Avenue  
Rincon, Georgia 31326  
T: 912.826.5996  
tlewis@rinconga.gov

**Please protect our waters by  
maintaining your septic system.**

prepared by  
Integrated Science & Engineering, Inc.  
[www.intse.com](http://www.intse.com)



## HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

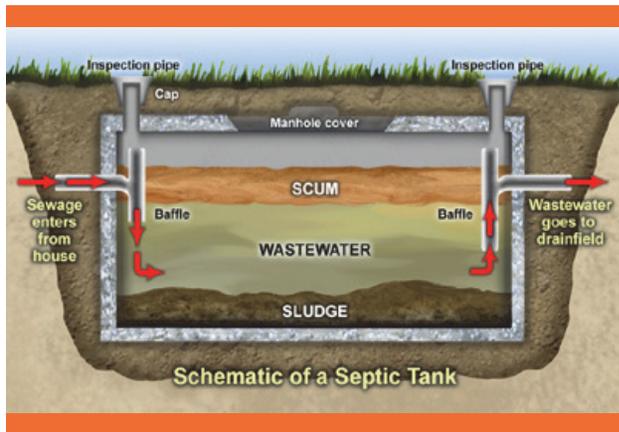


## HOW DOES IT WORK?

A typical septic system has four main components: a pipe from the home, a septic tank, a drainfield, and the soil. Microbes in the soil digest or remove most contaminants from wastewater before it eventually reaches groundwater.

The septic tank is a buried, watertight container typically made of concrete, fiberglass, or polyethylene. It holds the wastewater long enough to allow solids to settle out (forming sludge) and oil and grease to float to the surface (as scum). It also allows partial decomposition of the solid materials. Compartments and a T-shaped outlet in the septic tank prevent the sludge and scum from leaving the tank and traveling into the drainfield area. Screens are also recommended to keep solids from entering the drainfield.

The wastewater exits the septic tank and is discharged into the drainfield for further treatment by the soil. Microorganisms in the soil provide final treatment by removing harmful bacteria, viruses, and nutrients.



## HOW DO I MAINTAIN MY SEPTIC SYSTEM?

### *Pump frequently*

You should have your septic system inspected at least every 3 years by a professional and your tank pumped as necessary (generally every 3 to 5 years).

### *Use water efficiently*

Average indoor water use in the typical single-family home is almost 70 gallons per person per day. Dripping faucets can waste about 2,000 gallons of water each year. Leaky toilets can waste as much as 200 gallons each day. The more water a household conserves, the less water enters the septic system.

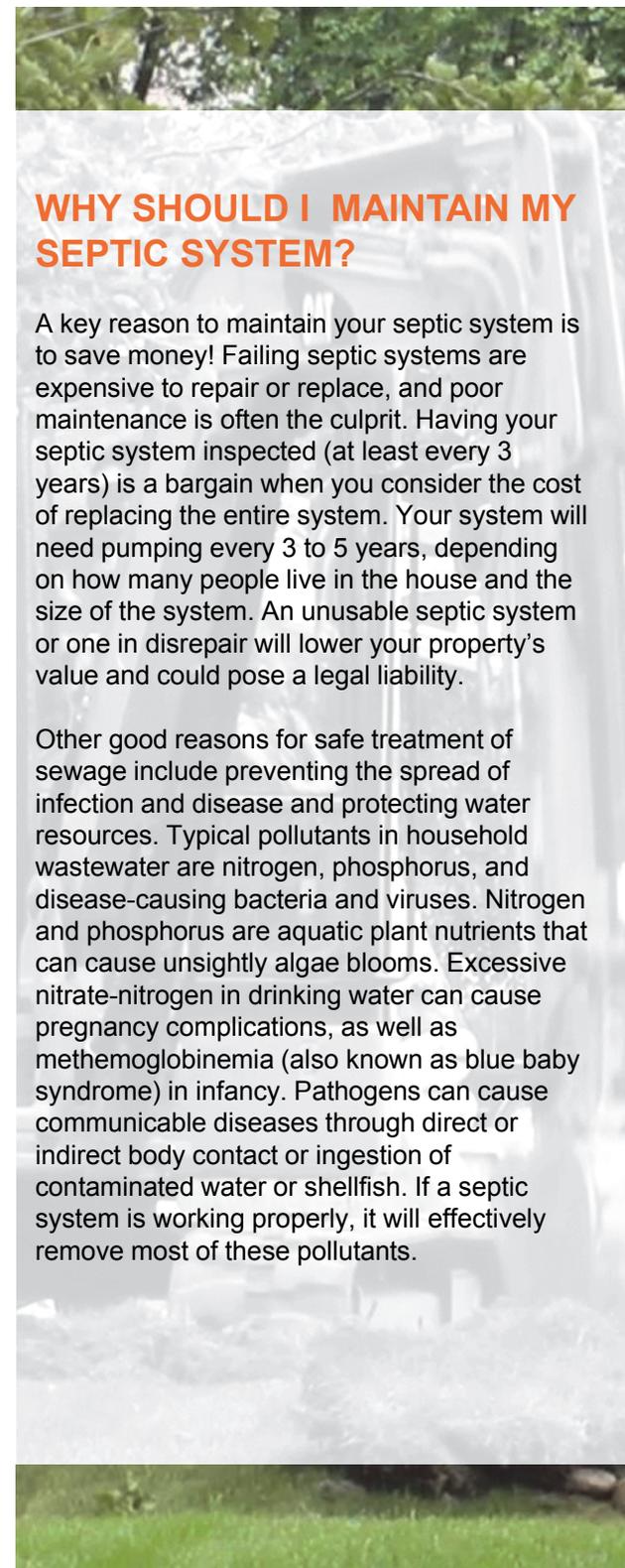
### *Flush responsibly*

Dental floss, feminine hygiene products, condoms, diapers, cotton swabs, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, cat litter, paper towels, and other kitchen and bathroom items can clog and potentially damage septic system components. Flushing household chemicals, gasoline, oil, pesticides, antifreeze, and paint can stress or destroy the biological treatment taking place in the system or might contaminate surface waters and groundwater.

**Not in My Septic System!**

**X Cloggers**  
diapers, cat litter, cigarette filters, coffee grounds, grease, feminine hygiene products, etc.

**X Killers**  
household chemicals, gasoline, oil, pesticides, antifreeze, paint, etc.



## WHY SHOULD I MAINTAIN MY SEPTIC SYSTEM?

A key reason to maintain your septic system is to save money! Failing septic systems are expensive to repair or replace, and poor maintenance is often the culprit. Having your septic system inspected (at least every 3 years) is a bargain when you consider the cost of replacing the entire system. Your system will need pumping every 3 to 5 years, depending on how many people live in the house and the size of the system. An unusable septic system or one in disrepair will lower your property's value and could pose a legal liability.

Other good reasons for safe treatment of sewage include preventing the spread of infection and disease and protecting water resources. Typical pollutants in household wastewater are nitrogen, phosphorus, and disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Nitrogen and phosphorus are aquatic plant nutrients that can cause unsightly algae blooms. Excessive nitrate-nitrogen in drinking water can cause pregnancy complications, as well as methemoglobinemia (also known as blue baby syndrome) in infancy. Pathogens can cause communicable diseases through direct or indirect body contact or ingestion of contaminated water or shellfish. If a septic system is working properly, it will effectively remove most of these pollutants.