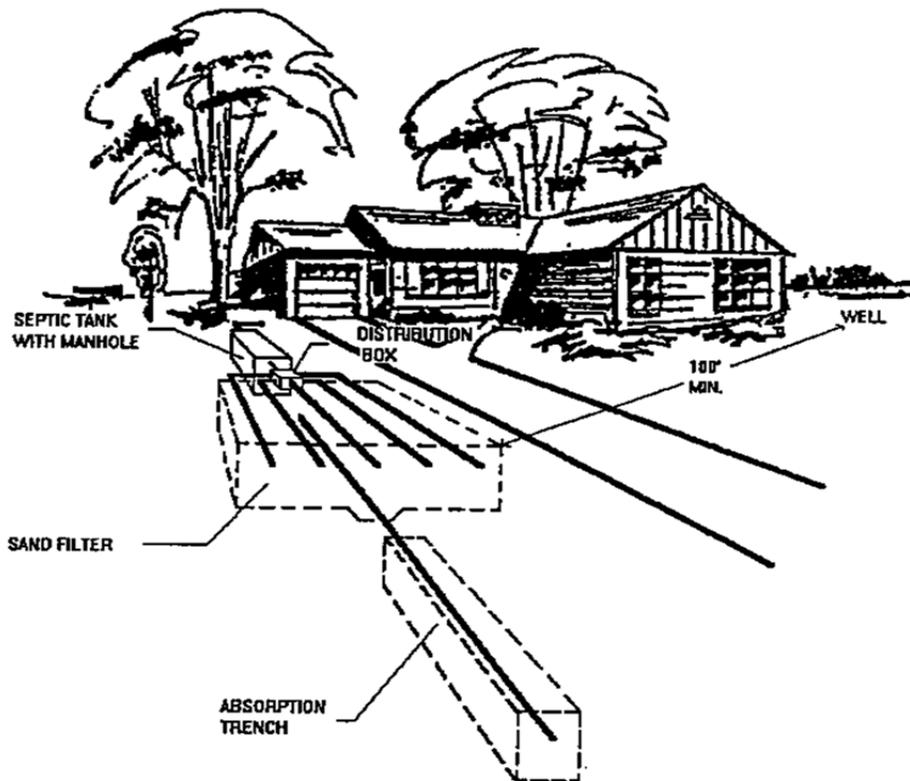


SAND FILTER MAINTENANCE TIPS



Provided it was constructed well, your new sand filter sewage treatment system will provide adequate treatment of your household sanitary wastes when it is operating properly. The lifespan of the system (i.e. 5 yrs. vs. 30 yrs.) is directly related to how well you maintain the system and how careful your family is in keeping undesirable wastes from entering the system. At some time in the future however, the pore spaces between the sand grains will begin to fill with inert and biological materials resulting in clogging of the filter. This will result in sewage ponding on top of the filter or even back-up of the entire system, necessitating replacing the filter at considerable expense.

By following the routine maintenance procedures listed below, you should be able to prevent any serious problems with the filter for many years!

1. Pump your primary septic tank once every two or three years. Failure to routinely clean septic tanks is the leading cause of sewage system problems. The outlet baffle filter should be cleaned when the septic tank is pumped. After the tank is pumped out, the filter should be removed, held over the septic tank manhole and rinsed off with a hose, being careful to rinse all septage material back into the tank.

2. Do not dispose of grease, toxic cleaning agents, paints/thinners, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, plastics, trash, etc. into your household sewage system. Extreme diligence should be exercised in keeping kitchen grease, the primary cause of premature sand filter clogging, out of the waste stream. Chemicals and strong disinfectants can kill the necessary bacteria in a septic tank.
3. Septic tank additives (biological or chemical) should not be used. They are unnecessary for the operation of your sand filter system, and may cause solids to discharge from the septic tank into the filter causing failure.
4. Garbage grinders substantially increase the accumulation of solids in a septic tank. If you have a garbage grinder, contact your local Health Department to make certain your septic tank is large enough to accommodate the extra solids.
5. Only allow household sanitary wastes into the septic system. All sump pump, roof, cellar and footing drains must be excluded from it. Backwash from water softeners should not be discharged to the septic system.
6. Divert all surface water and roof downspouts away from the septic system. The ground should be sloped to provide drainage away from the system in all directions.
7. Do not allow trees or shrubs to grow within ten feet of the septic tank(s), sand filter, or final absorption trench.
8. Keep the area above the septic system mowed to increase evaporation in the summer months. A healthy lawn absorbs much moisture from the soil and enhances system operation.
9. Do not install swimming pools or auxiliary buildings on top of any part of the sewage system.
10. Do not allow heavy vehicles to drive or park on the septic tank or sand filter to avoid damage.
11. Conserve your water usage. Repair leaky toilet tank valves and other plumbing fixtures as soon as possible. If plumbing fixtures are replaced, install certified water saving models that use less water.
12. Your sand filter system was most likely designed to accommodate two persons per bedroom. If your household is larger than this, or if you add additional bedrooms, contact your local Health Department office to see if the system should be enlarged.
13. Keep all plumbing and sand filter vent pipes clear and in good repair. Plumbing vents allow release of the gases produced by anaerobic bacteria processes in the septic tank and allow water to flow freely in pipes. The sand filter vents allow oxygen to reach the aerobic bacteria at work in the filter.

Adhering to these common sense rules will add years to the life of your system.

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