

## **Maintenance Tips for Long-Term Septic Health**

### **Pump Tank Regularly**

Pump every 3-5 years, depending on water usage and tank size.

### **Clean the Effluent Filter Every 3-6 Months**

The outlet filter in the septic tank should be cleaned every 3-6 months to prevent clogs that can back up the system.

### **Inspect the Distribution Box Every 2-3 Years**

Make sure it's level and not full of sludge or debris. An unlevel box causes uneven trench loading, which leads to drainfield failure.

### **Conserve Water**

Spread out laundry loads, fix leaky faucets, and install low-flow fixtures to reduce system strain.

### **Avoid Driving Over the System**

Heavy vehicles can crush tanks, D-boxes, and drainfield lines.

### **Keep Roots and Trees Away**

Roots can clog or damage pipes and distribution boxes.

### **Divert Surface Water**

Make sure gutters, sump pumps, and landscaping direct water away from the drainfield.

### **Use Septic-Safe Products**

Minimize chemical usage, don't flush wipes, grease, feminine products, non-biodegradable products and avoid the usage of garbage disposals on septic. Look for products labeled "septic-safe."

### **Know the Warning Signs**

Gurgling drains, sewage odors, soggy yards, or slow toilets can mean a problem with the tank, filter, or drainfield.

### **Keep Records**

Maintain a log of pump-outs, filter cleanings, inspections, and repairs. This is helpful for homeowners, buyers, and health inspectors.



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**Filter Cleaning Service Plan**  
**Inspections and Locating**  
**Emergency Service - Distribution Boxes**  
**Dose Pump Repair - Line Replacement**  
**Septic Filtration - Safety Devices**  
**Line Cleaning - Hydro Jetting**  
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## Septic System Components & What They Do:

### 1. Septic Tank

The main holding tank where wastewater from your home first collects. Solids settle to the bottom, oils float to the top, and partially clarified water flows out to the next stage.

### 2. Inlet Pipe

This pipe carries waste from your home's plumbing into the septic tank.

### 3. Outlet Pipe

Located on the opposite end of the septic tank, it allows the liquid (effluent) to exit the tank and move toward the drainfield.

### 4. Baffles (or Tees)

These are found at the inlet and outlet of the septic tank. They slow the flow of waste, helping to prevent solids from leaving the tank.

### 5. Effluent Filter

A screen placed at the outlet of the tank to trap any remaining solids, protecting the drainfield from clogs.

### 6. Distribution Box (D-Box)

Evenly distributes the liquid effluent into the drainfield trenches. If it becomes unlevel or damaged, certain trenches may receive too much water—causing saturation and failure.

### 7. Drainfield (Leach Field/Absorption Area)

A network of trenches. Effluent is filtered through soil, which naturally treats and disperses the water.

### 8. Inspection Ports

Small access points placed above the tank or drainfield to check system function and fluid levels without digging.

### 9. Manhole Covers (Tank Lids)

Provide access to the inside of the septic tank for pumping/inspections.

### 10. Soil Treatment Area

The surrounding soil that filters and absorbs the effluent as it leaches out of the absorption area. Examples are trenches, drywells and mounds.

### 11. Dose Tank (if present)

Used in systems where gravity can't move effluent to the drainfield. Contains a pump that pushes the liquid out.

### 12. Alarm System (if present)

Monitors pump operation or fluid levels and alerts you if something is wrong—like a failed pump or high water level.

## Indiana Laws & Health Department Guidelines:

### Septic Permits Are Required

You must obtain a permit through your local county health department before installing, repairing, or replacing a septic system.

### Inspections Are Mandatory for New Systems

New or modified systems require site evaluations, designs, and inspections before and after installation.

### Pump Every 3–5 Years (Recommended)

While there's no statewide law on pumping frequency, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) recommends pumping every 3 to 5 years to prevent system failure. If taking heavy duty antibiotics or undergoing chemotherapy, more frequent pumping may be required.

### Illegal Discharge = Fines

Discharging untreated wastewater to the ground surface, ditch, creek, or storm drain is illegal and subject to fines or enforcement action.

### Repairs Must Be Approved

Any work on a failing system (e.g., replacing a D-box, repairing trenches) requires approval and permits from the county health department.

### Property Transfers May Require Inspection

Some Indiana counties require septic inspections during real estate transactions—check with your local health department.

### Setback Distances Must Be Maintained

Septic systems must be a specific distance from wells, buildings, property lines, and water bodies. Violating these setbacks can result in a denial of use or fines.



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