

Hydraulic overloading and lack of maintenance are the most common causes of onsite wastewater treatment system failure. Septic tanks should be pumped and inspected every 3-5 years.

Conservation of water is a basic step toward ensuring this important part of your home works properly.

Well water supplies should be tested at least once a year to check for bacteria, nitrates and other possible contaminants.

Well maintenance is a necessity. Keep contaminants such as roof runoff, driveway runoff, lawn chemicals and pet droppings away from the well head. Have your well inspected by a professional every 3-5 years.

The most common source of well water contamination is the onsite wastewater treatment system.

If your well water test reveals contamination, check the integrity of your wastewater system.

If inspection of your wastewater system reveals flaws, test your well water supply immediately. Serious illnesses can result from contaminated water supplies.

Did You Know?

Less than 1% of all water on Earth is fresh water available for human use in surface water and groundwater supplies. There is no “new” water on earth. It recycles endlessly from clouds to precipitation to surface water and groundwater. Evaporation and transpiration return water to the clouds.

Our homes – with kitchens, bathrooms, gardens, and onsite wastewater treatment systems – and ourselves – are part of the water cycle.

A properly designed, installed and maintained onsite wastewater treatment system presents no undue threat to the environment – but all three of those conditions must be met.

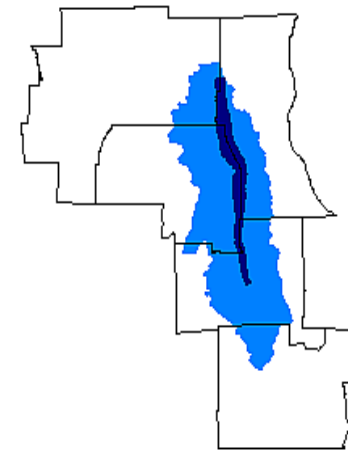


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**WATER CONSERVATION
IN YOUR
HOME**

**PROTECTS THE
WASTEWATER SYSTEM
IN YOUR
YARD**



SLAP-5

**Seneca Lake
Area Partners in
5 Counties**

Be Water Wise

Water conservation will help protect your water supply and your onsite wastewater treatment (septic) system.

Know the capacity of your wastewater treatment system. Ask for the design specifications to understand what volume of water the system can accommodate.

Invest in a water meter to track actual usage. Every gallon of water used must be processed through your wastewater system. Overloading can lead to costly repairs or replacement.

Low-flow fixtures save many gallons of shower, faucet and toilet flows.

Keep drinking water cool in the refrigerator instead of running the faucet until the water cools.

Compost food waste. Garbage grinders use lots of water and load the septic tank with solids.

Run the dishwasher and washing machines only when full. Use a laundromat if your well or wastewater system is stressed.

When hand-washing dishes, fill one sink with wash water, the other with rinse water instead of rinsing with running water.

Mean Per Capita Indoor Daily Water Use

(American Water Works Research Foundation 1999)

Water Use	Gallons
Faucets	10.9
Bathing	2.4
Showers	12.6
Dishwashing	1.4
Toilets	18.5
Laundry	17
Other household use	2.7
Leaks	9.5
Total	75

Turn off the tap when you brush your teeth, shave or wash your face and save 4 gallons per minute.

Dripping faucets and leaking toilets are usually easily repaired. To detect a leaking toilet, put food coloring in the tank, wait for 30 minutes without flushing and check for color in the toilet bowl.

Don't use the toilet to flush tissues, insects or other waste-basket articles.

Use a timer to limit shower times. Turn off the water when you soap or shampoo, turn it back on to rinse.

Protect Your Absorption Field

The absorption field is the most expensive part of your wastewater system. It is also the part that processes wastewater to return it to the groundwater aquifer in a sanitary condition.

Direct roof water downspouts and driveway runoff away from the absorption field.

Don't :

park vehicles

pave

build structures

plant anything with deep roots

install automatic sprinklers

drive anything heavier than a

lawnmower on the absorption field.



Consider the capacity of the wastewater system if you're planning to install a spa or high volume tub, surround shower, garbage disposal or other water intensive appliance.