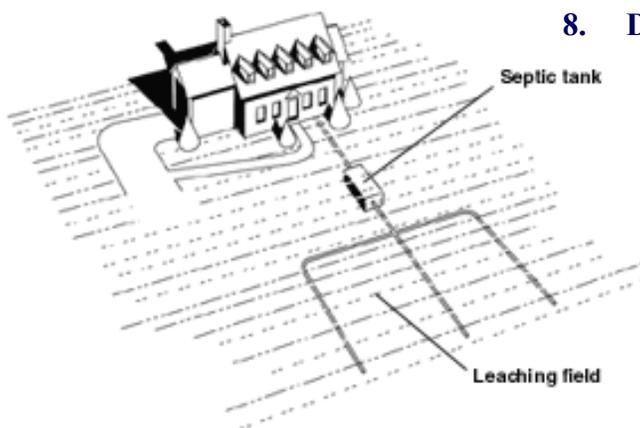


Septic Systems

Most Manitobans who are not connected to a municipal sewer system use a septic tank and leaching bed. Proper maintenance of your septic system is essential for your safety and environmental protection.

Proper care and maintenance of your septic tank and leaching bed

1. **A septic tank should generally be pumped out every three to five years**, depending on household water use and tank size. Have it checked by a professional regularly!
2. **Regulate the amount of water entering the septic system.** Excessive water use can cause solid waste to overflow from the septic tank into the leaching bed.
3. **Septic systems rely on bacteria to break down waste material.** These bacteria can be killed by even small amounts of paints, solvents, thinners, nail polish remover and other household compounds poured down the drain. Household disinfectants such as bleach or toilet bowl cleaner can be used sparingly.
4. **Avoid putting materials that do not break down easily into the septic system.** This includes oils, diapers, tampons, condoms, paper towels, kitty litter, plastics, cigarettes, and kitchen wastes.
5. **The area over the leaching bed must have good grass cover, good ventilation and adequate sunlight** to promote evaporation and allow oxygen to reach the bacteria. Nothing should be constructed over the leaching bed including: parking areas, patios, decks or sheds.
6. **Extra care should be taken if your septic system is near a water course or body.** Leaks from your septic system could contribute polluting nutrients, pathogens and chemicals into the water.
7. **Don't plant trees or shrubs near the leaching bed.** Roots can damage the distribution pipes.
8. **Don't water the grass over the leaching bed,** and ensure that all surface drainage (such as from eave spouts) is directed away from the leaching bed. The additional water may interfere with the ability of the soil to absorb the wastewater.



More Information:

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation: Your Septic System
http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/maho/gemare/gemare_009.cfm

Manitoba Conservation Wastewater Systems
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/envprograms/wastewater>