

**Town of
McClellanville**

**Important Information on Septic and Well Water Systems
September 17-21 is National Septic Smart Week**



**SC Dept of Health and Environ-
mental Control**
2600 Bull St, Columbia, SC 29201
(803)898-3432



**United States Environmental Protec-
tion Agency**
<https://www.epa.gov/septic/new-homebuyers-brochure-and-guide-septic-systems>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Wastewater Management
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
(Mailcode 4204M) Washington, DC
20460



Charleston Co.
<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/community-development/water-septic.php>
Community Development Department
Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building
4045 Bridge View Drive, Suite C216
N. Charleston, SC 29405-7464

(843) 202-6960

Office Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30am - 5pm

Septic Services with a McClellanville Business License

Knights Septic Services (843) 873-3930

Septic systems, like private wells, are the homeowner's responsibility. An improperly used or maintained septic tank system can affect an entire community by causing one or more of the following problems: a breeding area for mosquitoes and other insects, undesirable odors, costly damage caused by sewage backing up inside the home, the spread of serious diseases, and pollution of groundwater, wells, rivers, and ponds.

Septic Tank Systems

Parts of a Septic Tank System

The most common type of septic system has four main parts:

1. An exit pipe that carries wastewater from the home to the septic tank and vents noxious gases up and out of the house.
2. A buried, watertight septic tank made of concrete, fiberglass, or polyethylene, usually installed about 6 feet from a home.
3. The drain field, which consists of one or more distributor boxes and a network of pipes buried in relatively shallow trenches that are usually packed with gravel or other filler.
4. Soil, full of bacteria that digest most contaminants before wastewater reaches groundwater.

How it Works

Household wastewater is flushed or washed through the exit pipe into the septic tank.

Heavy solids sink to the bottom. Over 24-48 hours the solids break down to form a sludge layer. Lighter floatable solids, such as grease, oils, and fats, collect at the top of the liquid in the tank to form a scum layer.

The bacteria that live in the septic tank constantly break down solid waste. The tank's fittings hold the scum and sludge from flowing out into the drain field.

Liquid that is washed or flushed into the tank is known as effluent. In the tank, effluent is partially treated or "clarified" by bacteria. As the tank fills up, the liquid empties into the drain field, where it is absorbed into the soil.

The liquid drains through the soil layers, where bacteria filter and digest contaminants. By the time the wastewater reaches groundwater, it is fully treated.

Additives

Companies that make and sell biological additives sometimes claim that their product restores a septic tank's bacterial balance, and that this is necessary as part of a routine monthly maintenance program. But bacteria already reside in human feces, so these additives usually are not necessary

Septic Tank Maintenance Tips

Follow these tips to keep your septic tank system running smoothly and save yourself money on repairs.

Have your septic system inspected every one to two years and **cleaned (pumped out) every three to five years** or more frequently, depending on the tank size and number of people using the system.

- Never flush cat litter, coffee grounds, diapers, towelettes (even the 'flushable' type), cigarette butts, tampons, condoms, grease, dental floss, baby wipes, paints, thinners, pesticides, oils, medicines, or excessive household chemicals.
- Know your system's location. When you have the tank pumped, draw a diagram or map showing its location in relation to fixed points - corners of the house, steps, or fence posts. Ask the pumper to help you locate the drain field. Note its location on your diagram, along with the location of your drinking water well. Keep this sketch with your septic tank records.
- Place an easily movable item - a birdbath or decorative rock - over the tank lid to make it easy to find.
- Protect the drain field.
- Add a barrier to prevent anyone from driving over the drain field, which could break the tank lid and pipes and compact the soil, restricting oxygen flow. (Bacteria in the drain field need oxygen.)
- Divert down spouts and other surface water - especially irrigation sprinklers - away from the drain field. Too much water can harm it.
- Don't dig, build, or plant anything other than grass over the drain field.
- Conserve water. Reduce the amount of wastewater that must be treated and disposed of by your system:
 - Wash no more than one or two loads of clothes daily. Up to 53 gallons of water flood your septic system with each load, so it's best to spread laundry out over the week.
 - Fix leaky faucets and toilets; over time, they can send hundreds of extra gallons of water through your septic system.
 - Use low-flow fixtures and appliances whenever possible. Low-flush toilets use between 1 and 1.6 gallons of water per flush and may reduce your water bill by up to one-third. Low-flow faucet aerators on sink faucets. low-flow showerheads and low-flow washing machines will also save water.
- Do not use a garbage disposal. It adds up to 50 percent more solids to your septic tank, and your tank will require more frequent pump-outs.

- Do not use caustic drain openers for clogged drains. Use boiling water or a drain snake instead.
- Make sure your water softener is not plumbed to wash back into the septic tank.
- Keep good records, including a copy of your septic tank permit.
- Do not use septic tank additives, commercial septic tank cleansers, yeast, sugar, etc. These products are not necessary and some may be harmful to your system.
- Use commercial bathroom cleaners and laundry detergents in moderation. Try cleaning toilets, sinks, showers, and tubs with a mild detergent or baking soda.

Maintenance Worksheets for Septic Tanks

<http://www.scdhec.gov/Library/CR-009824.pdf> OR

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/septic_sticker.pdf

Important Warning

Be extremely careful around open or exposed septic tanks. Falling into a septic tank can cause death from suffocation or drowning. Even leaning over a septic tank can cause it to collapse.

The hydrologic cycle is: The natural process of rain and snow falling to earth and evaporating back to form clouds and fall again. The water falling to earth flows into streams, rivers, lakes and into the soil collecting to form groundwater.

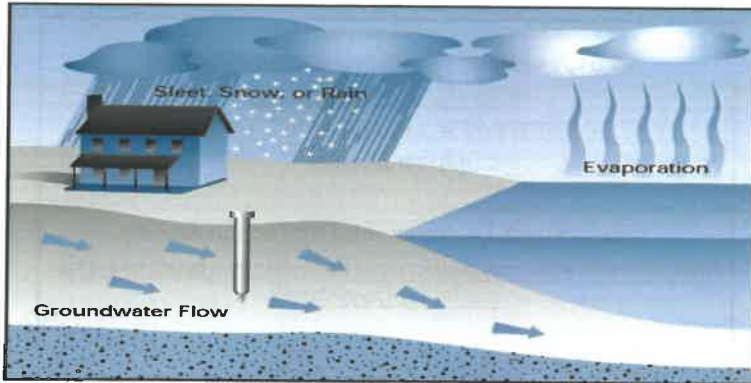
Application for Existing Well Upgrade and/or Existing Septic System Upgrade Charleston Co.

The Community Services Department has limited funding available for Charleston County residents living in owner-occupied housing and in need of an upgrade to existing well and or septic systems. All applicants are required to go through a federal certification process to determine eligibility mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Applications are available online by clicking on the following links:

<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/community-development/water-septic.php>

If you want to request an existing well/septic system upgrade application by mail or have questions, contact the Community Services Department.

Community Development Department
Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building
4045 Bridge View Drive, Suite C216
N. Charleston, SC 29405-7464
(843) 202-6960
Office Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30am - 5pm



Well Water Systems

Protecting Your Ground Water Supply When Building, Modifying Or Closing A Well

- Hire a certified well driller for any new well construction or modification
- Slope well area so surface runoff drains away
- When closing a well:
 - Do not cut off the well casing below the land surface
 - Hire a certified well contractor to fill or seal the well

Preventing Problems

- Install a locking well cap or sanitary seal to prevent unauthorized use of, or entry into, the well
- Do not mix or use pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, degreasers, fuels, and other pollutants near the well
- Never dispose of wastes in dry wells or in abandoned wells
- Pump and inspect septic systems as often as recommended by your local health department
- Never dispose of hazardous materials in a septic system
- Take care in working or mowing around your well

Maintaining Your Well

- Each month check visible parts of your system for problems such as:
 - Cracking or corrosion,
 - Broken or missing well cap,
 - Settling and cracking of surface seals
- Have the well tested once a year for coliform bacteria, nitrates, and other contaminants
- Keep accurate records in a safe place, including:
 - Construction contract or report
 - Maintenance records, such as disinfection or sediment removal
 - Any use of chemicals in the well
 - Water testing results

After A Flood — Concerns And Advisories

- Stay away from the well pump while flooded to avoid electric shock
- Do not drink or wash from the flooded well to avoid becoming sick

- Get assistance from a well or pump contractor to clean and turn on the pump
- After the pump is turned back on, pump the well until the water runs clear to rid the well of flood water
- If the water does not run clear, get advice from the county or state health department or extension service
- For additional information go to <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/consumer/whatdo.htm>

Well Water Testing Services

SC DHEC's Private Well Program and the EQC Laboratories Performs analytical testing of water from residential wells for a fee. Homeowners can deliver samples to their local DHEC office and have analyses done for bacteria, metals and minerals. Results of the testing are mailed to the well owner along with an explanation of the results. The Town of McClellanville has sample bottles to be used to collect a water sample from your well. .

Water samples must then be brought to
SCDHEC

1362 McMillan Ave., Suite 300, Charleston, SC
29405 Phone # 843-953-0150

or

2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.
Phone # 803-898-3432

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

If you wish to submit a general comment, question or concern via:

Email: info@dhec.sc.gov

Phone: (803) 898-DHEC (3432)

Mail: 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201

U .S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Or call:

The Safe Drinking Water Hotline
(800) 426-4791

The hotline operates from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM (EST)

The hotline can be accessed on the Internet at
www.epa.gov/safewater/drinklink.html

You can get a list of Federal drinking water standards from the EPA website. In addition, the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water gives chemical and health risk information for a number of drinking water problems through its Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791. This information is also on the internet at www.epa.gov/safewater.



For more information, visit epa.gov/privatewells

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Town Hall Phone: 843.887.3712

Town Hall Fax: 843.887.3094

Postal Customer

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405 Pinckney Street
McClellanville, SC 29458

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