

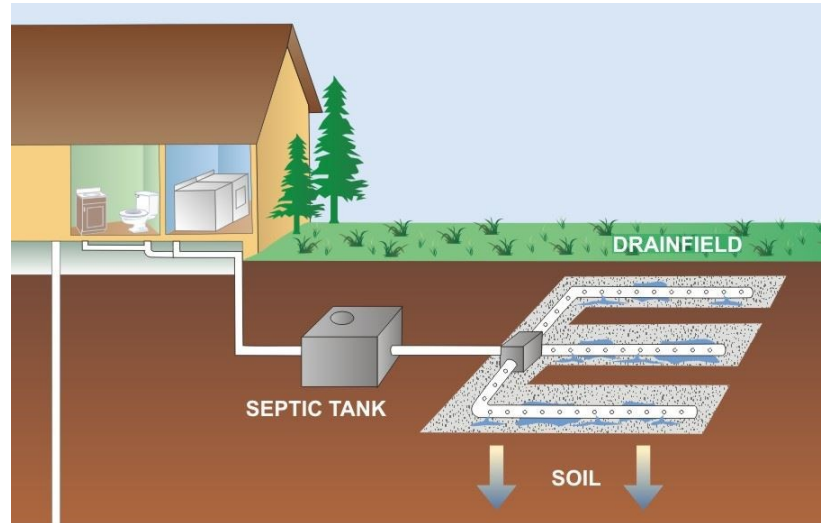
# Septic Smarts

## *Why are we concerned about septic systems?*

A septic system treats and disposes of wastewater when a home is not connected to a public sewer system. Septic systems that are not properly cared for can lead to contamination of our surface waters, groundwater resources, and wells.

## *How do I maintain my septic system?*

- Have someone who is licensed to handle septic systems pump out your septic tank every 3 to 5 years.
- Repair leaking toilets or faucets to avoid overloading the system.
- The law requires that “alternative systems” be inspected by a licensed sewage system operation and maintenance professional at least once per year.
- Do not plant anything but grass near the drainfield. Roots from trees and shrubs can clog the system.
- Divert rainwater (especially from gutters) away from the drainfield area



## *What can I do to avoid septic problems?*

- Do not put cooking grease, oils, leftover food, diapers and wipes, feminine hygiene products, condoms, or household chemicals (including paints, pesticides, motor oil) down the drain.
- Spread out laundry loads. Do not do it all on the same day.
- Do not drain large amounts of water down the drain (water softeners, hot tubs, etc.).

**For more information:** [www.epa.gov/septicSMART](http://www.epa.gov/septicSMART)



9/18

## Health Whys

A public health message from  
[www.tjhd.org](http://www.tjhd.org)

Follow us on  
Facebook



**VDH** VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH  
*Protecting You and Your Environment*

You can find this and other timely public health tips and events on the Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD) Facebook page. Check us out and “like us!”