

What Happens When Your **SEPTIC SYSTEM FAILS**



What happens if the thing nobody wants happens?

If you live in Massachusetts, what are the mandatory steps for proper replacement or repair? Well, let's back up to look at some of typical signs that your septic system is failing. Sewage and grey water backs up through the drains into the house. Run back comes from the leach field when the tank is pumped. Seemingly desirable lush, green grass starts to grow over the leach field. A Title 5 Inspection identifies the failure before other signs appear.

It is important to identify why your system failed and what you can do to increase the life of the new system. People tend to skip this step, but not knowing can bring unnecessary disaster again in the future. For instance, if you have a water softener that discharges to the septic system, or if you have a leaky toilet, it most likely will cause any system you install to fail prematurely. Identifying these culprits is critical to protecting the investment in your septic system.

Once you have discovered why your septic system failed, it is time to select an engineer to design the new system. Interview several candidates and check their reviews. Many engineers use the same tools as a matter of habit even if those tools are not the best for the site. For example, everyone has seen mounded septic systems, but in most cases those mounds could be reduced by 2-3 feet. Your engineer should also include you in decision making since you pay for the system and live with the outcomes of the installation on your yard and your landscaping.

When it's time to start the process, Dig Safe will come in to mark your property for the location of underground the utilities. The septic system engineer will conduct a site visit to confirm your number of bedrooms, check for wetlands, locate any wells, and see where Dig Safe has identified utilities. The engineer will survey your property lines, buildings, existing septic system, and any other relevant features of your site.

If wetlands are located on your property or any abutting property, a botanist must mark the wetlands with flags and the engineer must return to locate each flag on the site design plan to avoid infringing on them. Once all the required information is located on the design plan, the engineer can determine where the new system can be located.

Soil And Water Table Testing

Now it's time to start soil and water table testing



Now it's time to start soil and water table testing that will tell the septic engineer where your system will work on your land. In order to dig the holes in Massachusetts to accomplish these things, two steps must happen first. A trench permit must be issued by the DPW. To obtain the permit, an excavator must present his hydraulics license and insurance certificate with a completed application and fee. Once a trench permit is obtained, a soil evaluation and perk test permit must be filed, along with a fee to the Board of Health.

The soil evaluation and perk test typically take about 4-5 hours. They identify how high the water table is and at what rate water will percolate through the soil. This information is used to determine how high and how big your leach field must be to work properly. This technical environmental information is critical for the engineer in order to complete an appropriate septic system design plan.

The next step is to submit the completed plan to the Board of Health with a design review fee. If any variances are being requested, the engineer must attend a Board of Health meeting to explain the request for approval. A request may only be granted by a vote of the board unless the board gives the Health Agent authority to issue approvals. organisms that break down the effluent can be killed off or diminished if too many chemicals are used on a regular basis. Once the design plan is approved, it is time to obtain quotes from installers. When choosing an installer, discuss when they can start, when they can finish, what is included and excluded from their price, and what areas of the yard will be affected.

If landscaping is important you should discuss it with your installer. Most installers will only grade the soil and plant grass. Other landscaping features could be extra. The installer you hire will pick up your approved septic design plan from the Board of Health. Construction and installation now can begin. Construction typically takes 1 week. You should be able to use your home as normal during the construction, except for 1-3 hours when the pipe from the house is connected to the septic tank. During construction, there will be several inspections performed by the Board of Health to ensure the system is installed properly. Once installation is complete, your engineer submits an "As Built" plan which certifies how your system was installed and prepared. The engineer and the installer sign the certificate of completion along with the Board of Health. Your system is then ready to use.

Septic Preservation Services is available to prevent and solve septic system failures. They can help you with all aspects of the process, from troubleshooting, design, consultation, installation and maintenance. Call them at 877-378-4279 or visit www.septicpreservation.com.