

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW SEPTIC SYSTEMS FUNCTION -

VISIT THESE WEBSITES

- EPA's Septic (On Site) Systems
<http://cfpub.epa.gov/owm/septic/index.cfm>
- National Small Flows Clearinghouse Septic System Information
http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc/nsfc_septicnews.htm
- A Homeowners Guide to Septic Systems
http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc/pdf/homeowner_guide_long.pdf
- Groundwater Protection and Your Septic System
http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc/pdf/septic%20news/Septic_Tank3.pdf

FOR INFORMATION ON CONTAMINANTS IN DRINKING WATER, VISIT THE NH DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES WEBSITE

FACTSHEETS—WATER SUPPLY:

<HTTP://WWW.DES.NH.GOV/WS.HTM>

NITRATE/NITRITE IN DRINKING WATER

<HTTP://WWW.DES.NH.GOV/FACTSHEETS/WS/WS-3-9.HTM>

Do You Know -

- ◆ *if you are on a septic system? If unsure, call the Sewer Department at 527-4778.*
- ◆ *where your septic tank and leach field are?*
- ◆ *the last time the tank was pumped out?*
- ◆ *how old the system is?*

PROTECT YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

1. Regularly inspect your system and pump your tank as necessary.
2. Don't dispose of grease, coffee grounds, diapers, cat litter, latex paint, feminine hygiene products, household hazardous wastes, etc. in sinks or toilets. These items can clog the distribution lines or impair the function of the tank.
3. Minimize or eliminate use of sink "disposal" units which place an added burden on your system.
4. Care for your leach field (drainfield). Avoid driving or parking vehicles on it. Plant only grass over or near the leach field to avoid damage by roots.
5. Avoid use of water softeners; the salts which discharge during backwash into a septic system can crystallize and clog the distribution lines.

Reminder

Please visit the Town website and complete the survey.
www.gilfordnh.org

Town of Gilford
47 Cherry Valley Rd.
Gilford NH 03249
Planning Dept. : 603-527-4727

TOWN OF GILFORD



WATER QUALITY AND YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

Brochure produced by the
Gilford Drinking Water Protection Committee
with funding assistance provided by the
NH Department of Environmental Services

Proper Use and Maintenance of Septic Systems is Critical to Safeguarding Water Quality

The **Gilford Drinking Water Protection Committee** was appointed by the Town in 2005 to develop a protection plan which would safeguard current water resources and plan for future needs.

Several issues related to residential development and land use were identified as posing **threats to drinking water resources, with septic systems being a lead concern.**

This brochure is a direct result of a recommendation made in the plan to educate Gilford homeowners about septic system use and maintenance and the **potential impact on water quality from failed septic systems.**

The town is also interested in trying to implement a septic system maintenance program and as a first step has developed a survey which can be found on the town website: www.gilfordnh.org

We urge all residents to take a moment, read this brochure and visit the town website to complete the survey.

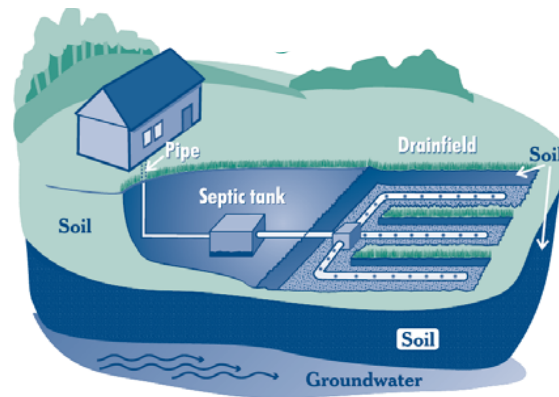
Thank you.



Funding for this project was provided in part by a Watershed Assistance Grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services with Clean Water Act Section 319 funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Everything that goes down the drain, toilet, dishwasher, bathtub, and/or washing machine goes to some type of waste water disposal system; usually it's either a private septic system or a municipal sewer system.

If a home is on a private system, that system needs to be maintained in order to function properly. **Why?**



THE SEPTIC SYSTEM

The septic system is a two-part sewage treatment and disposal system buried in the ground, composed of a septic tank and a leaching system. The sewage generally flows by gravity; first into the septic tank where the larger particles are removed and some decomposition takes place and then into the leaching system where it soaks into the ground.

The effluent that enters the leach field contains bacteria (*E. coli*), nitrates, phosphorus, and other chemicals; **remember**—whatever you put down your drain or toilet ends up in your septic system!

The leachate or effluent from your septic system eventually filters through the soil and becomes

groundwater. If your system was located and installed properly and maintained, this arrangement works to naturally filter out the pollutants. However, inadequately functioning and/or failing septic systems contribute to groundwater contamination. Wastewater from septic systems may include many types of contaminants, such as nitrates, harmful bacteria and viruses.

Many homeowners in Gilford live along or near the lake, a stream, pond, or wetland. Many are seasonal and island residents. Although the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project helped improve the water quality of the lake, there are still many cottages or homes with old septic systems throughout the Winnepesaukee watershed.

Did You Know

- ◆ 80% of homeowners in Gilford are on private septic systems?
- ◆ if you are on public water or a community well, it does **NOT** mean you are necessarily also on public sewer?
- ◆ you could be polluting your drinking water, your neighbor's and the lakes or streams nearby if you don't properly maintain your septic system?
- ◆ Lake Winnepesaukee is listed for *E. coli* on the State's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters by Nonpoint Sources?
- ◆ it can cost upwards of **\$5000** to replace a failed leach field compared to ~ \$150 for pumping the tank once every 3 yrs.?