

Township of West Milford

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Health - Environmental Septic Tank Maintenance

SEPTIC TANK MAINTENANCE

Frequency of Pumping

Septic tanks must be periodically cleaned (pumped) to remove floating scum and sludge that accumulate. If either floating scum or sludge is allowed to enter the soil treatment system (drainfield) it will cause expensive and often irreparable damage. How often to clean a septic tank depends on its size, use, and operating condition. The general rule for pumping frequency is 3 to 5 years. The recent ordinance calls for pumping every 3 years. Please submit a copy of your receipt if you pumped before we began issuing permits to residents (Jan 09).

Proper Cleaning Method

Cleaning, or pumping, as it's often called, must be done by a State-licensed contractor. Proper cleaning will remove **ALL** scum, sludge and liquid from the septic tank(s). This requires pumping, flushing, and backflushing liquid contents back and forth between the truck's tank and the septic tank through the manhole several times. This process breaks up all scum and sludge in the tank, allowing all solids to be removed by the truck's suction line. Floating scum left in the tank after cleaning may plug baffles or allow solids to enter the drainfield when the tank refills. Cleaning will leave a black film on the tank walls and a small amount of liquid on the tank floor. This contains millions of bacteria to help get the tank working following the cleaning.

When the tank is cleaned, ask the contractor to make sure the baffles are in place and functioning properly. Cleaning a tank through the inspection pipes will often leave solids in the tank and possibly damage baffles.

INSIST that the tank be cleaned through the manhole. After cleaning, it is not necessary to add a starter. Bacteria present in wastewater and in the tank will do the job.

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities licenses septic tank pumpers.

Township Registered Pumpers:

Accurate Waste Systems, Inc.	- 226 Prospect Pt. Rd., Lake Hopotcong - 973-663-6600
Beachstone Septic	- PO Bx 249, Hawthorne - 973-427-1888
Coppola Services	- 28 Executive Pkwy, Ringwood - 973-962-1890
Earth Care/Residual Mgmt.	- 49 Maple Grange Rd, Vernon - 973-764-6100
Lakeland Septic Co	- 29 Ricker Drive, Ringwood - 973-838-0438
M&B Trucking	- PO Bx 705, Butler - 973-838-5840
Morris Septic Svc.	- 130 Ryerson Ave. Suite 313, Wayne - 973-709-1700
North Church Exc. Corp.	- 33 Lasinski Rd, Franklin - 973-827-7828
North Jersey Septic Inc.	- 43 Layton Ln, Sparta - 973-383-7040
P& W Excavating	- 856 Warwick Tpke., Hewitt - 973-728-1155
Rich Kimble & Sons	- 822 Green Pond Rd, Rockaway - 973-664-9171
Rich Wingle Contractor, Inc.	- 237 Meyer Road, Branchville, NJ 07826
R & D Trucking, Inc.	- 1874 Rte. 23 No. - West Milford - 973-492-5006
Septic Care (Stern Auto Corp.)	- PO Bx 3113, Newton - 973-579-7109
Septic Experts, LLC	- 755 County Road 565, Augusta, NJ 973-875-8000
Zuidema Septic Service, Inc.	- 90 Midland Ave., Midland Pk. - 973-835-4475
Wm. H. Wilson Septic Sys Svc	- 201 Houses Corner Rd, Sparta - 973-729-2112

If you have any further questions, call the Health Department at 973-728-2720

Environment Health is dealing with new codes, lake sensitive properties and new technology. The following reasons for why lake properties are so sensitive is because of 1) small lots are close together, there is standard high water table (SHWT) with slow draining soils, adjacent wells, flood hazard areas and freshwater wetlands, 2) they need special NJ DEP permits or a Flood Hazard Areas and Freshwater Wetlands approval, 3) anything within 300' of a lake in West Milford, must seek special attention/approvals, and 4) Individual Lake Property Owner's Associations must be contacted when there is any work near the lake communities.

What's New in the Code?

1. If you take down your house entirely (and this is not just for lake communities), a new septic system that meets code 100% is required. Even if you do a major renovation, this also means you must upgrade your septic entirely to meet code. If your septic does not meet code entirely, then a Treatment Works Approval (TWA) from the NJ DEP is required. If your septic system was installed after 1996, the NJ DEP will make a determination if is acceptable or not.

- 2. There are hardships, which include fire and flood.
- 3. Effluent septic filters are required on all newly installed septic tanks.
- 4. Suitable fill material is required for newly installed septic systems.
- 5. Septic tank testing (hydraulic or pressure) is required for all new and existing septic and pump tanks that are installed after April 2, 2012.
- 6. Advanced wastewater treatment is required if you cannot meet the 4' Zone of Treatment requirement for any septic alteration. This is applicable to a very large portion of West Milford.

What's New in Technology?

Effluent Filters for Outlet Baffles of Septic Tanks.

1. Eco-Pods/Septic Tech for inside Septic Tank Treatment.
2. Peat Fiber Biofilter Wastewater Treatment.
3. Drip Dispersal Systems.