

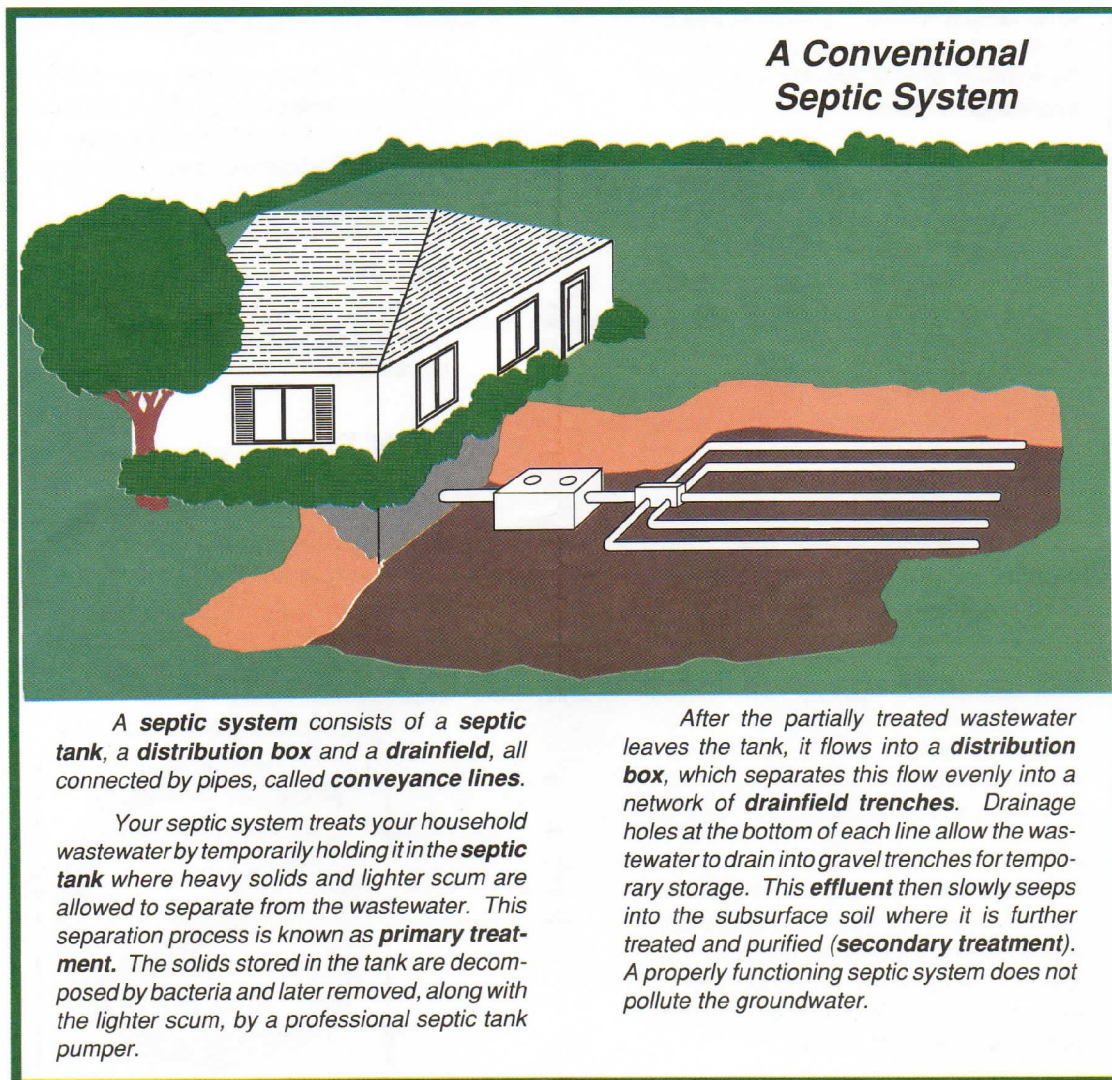
Sherman Home Inspections, Inc. & MA Title 5 Septic Certifications

Why the need for Title 5? The purpose of Title 5, 310 CMR 15.000, of the State Environmental Code is to provide for the protection of public health, safety, welfare and the environment by requiring the proper siting, construction, upgrade, and maintenance of on-site sewage disposal systems and appropriate means for the transport and disposal of septage. The septic tank is a buried, watertight container typically made of concrete, fiberglass, or polyethylene. It holds the waste water long enough to allow solids to settle out (forming sludge) and oil and grease to float to the surface (as scum). It also allows partial decomposition of the solid materials. Compartments and/or a T-shaped outlet in the septic tank prevent the sludge and scum from leaving the tank and traveling into the drainfield area. Screens are also recommended to keep solids from entering the drainfield. Newer tanks located more than 1' below grade generally have risers with lids at the ground surface to allow easy location, inspection, and pumping of the tank.

The following three sections of information are taken, in part, from a pamphlet printed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, for public review.

Septic Systems Explained

Septic systems are individual wastewater treatment systems that use the soil to treat small wastewater flows, usually from individual homes. They are typically used in rural or large lot settings where centralized wastewater treatment is impractical. There are many types of septic systems in use today. One typical variation is seen below. While all septic systems are individually designed for each site, most septic systems are based on the same principles.



A **septic system** consists of a **septic tank**, a **distribution box** and a **drainfield**, all connected by pipes, called **conveyance lines**.

Your septic system treats your household wastewater by temporarily holding it in the **septic tank** where heavy solids and lighter scum are allowed to separate from the wastewater. This separation process is known as **primary treatment**. The solids stored in the tank are decomposed by bacteria and later removed, along with the lighter scum, by a professional septic tank pumper.

After the partially treated wastewater leaves the tank, it flows into a **distribution box**, which separates this flow evenly into a network of **drainfield trenches**. Drainage holes at the bottom of each line allow the wastewater to drain into gravel trenches for temporary storage. This **effluent** then slowly seeps into the subsurface soil where it is further treated and purified (**secondary treatment**). A properly functioning septic system does not pollute the groundwater.