

November 19th is

World Toilet Day



World Toilet Day is an official United Nations observance day to inspire action on the global sanitation crisis. Worldwide 4.2 billion people live in areas without adequate toilets. These ineffective sanitation systems allow the spread of disease.

Here in the United States, we are lucky enough to live with ample sanitation resources. In observance of this day, let's look at one type, the septic system.

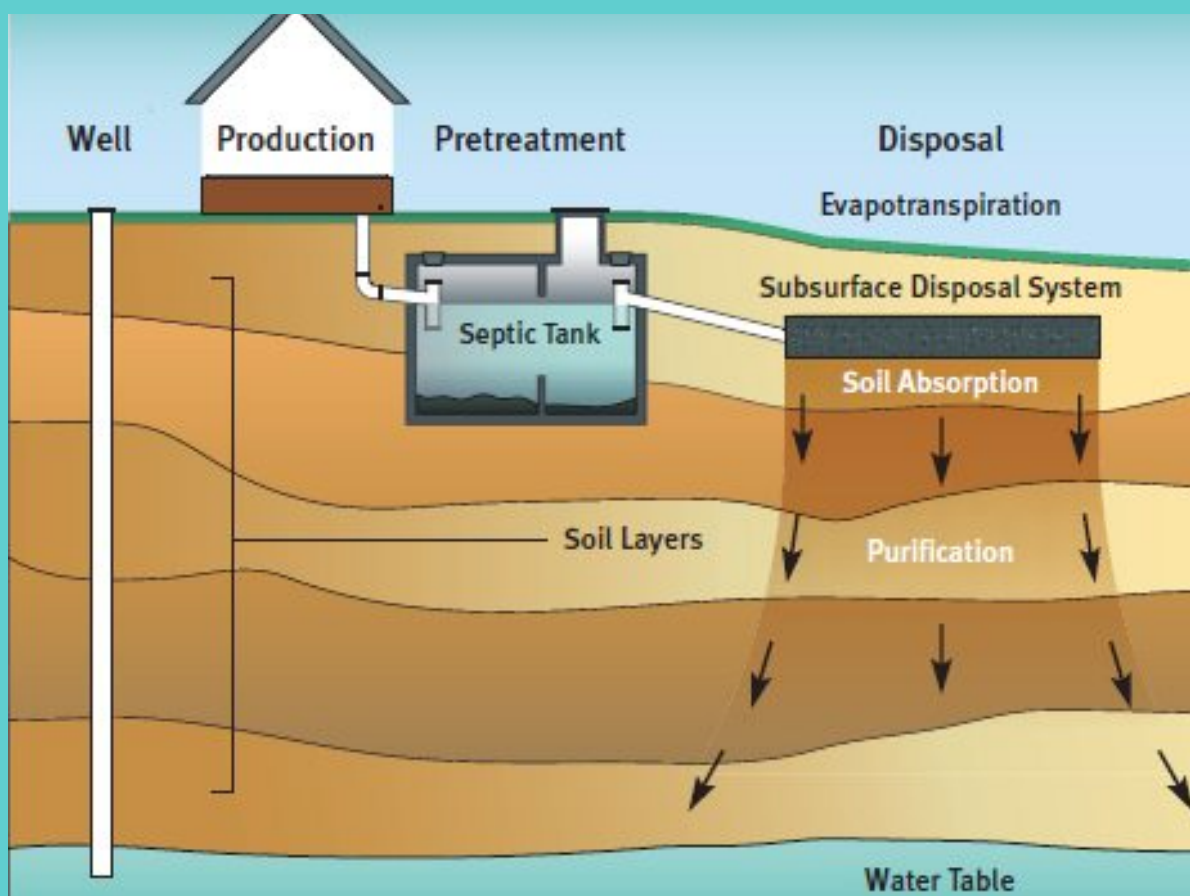
How Septic Systems Work

When you flush your toilet, the waste water is sent to the septic tank. At the same time, an equal amount of water flows out of the tank into the ground.

Inside of the septic tank, waste water separates into three layers: scum (oils and grease that float on the top), waste water, and sludge (heavier solids that sink to the bottom). Anaerobic bacteria start breaking down waste as it sits in the tank.

Periodically, sludge needs to be pumped out.

After spending an average of two days in the septic tank, waste water is carried out to the drain field. Water released into the drain field is further treated by gravel and soil as it trickles down.



Septic Systems in Montana

An estimated 30%, over 310,000 Montanans, live in homes dependent on septic systems

- Contact your local county health department to find out the specific requirements for your county.
- Permits are required prior to installing, modifying, repairing or increasing a septic system. Permitting ensures that sewage is disposed of properly to protect public health.
- All septic systems must be installed by approved contractors.
- The size of septic system required is determined by the number of bedrooms in a house.
- All systems must have an easily accessible inspection port.
- Groundwater monitoring may be required if groundwater is within 7 feet of the surface.



MONTANA
FOOD & CONSUMER
SAFETY PROGRAM

