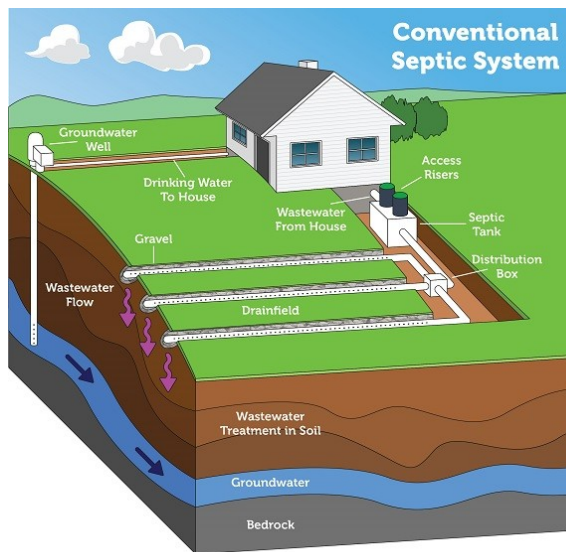


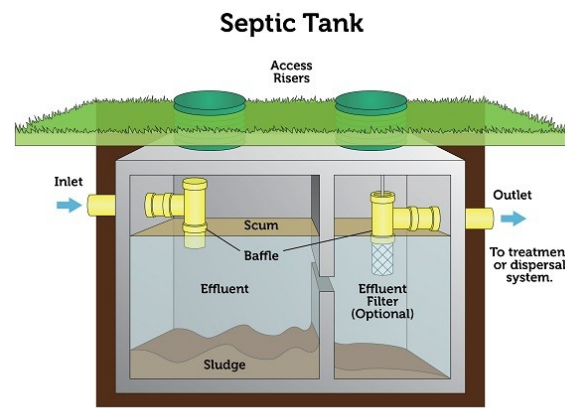
Septic System Inspection & Servicing Checklists

Sensitive Use Properties (Daycares, Schools, Community Centres, Public Facilities)

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Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.



Please note: The number of compartments in a septic tank vary by state and region.

Typical conventional septic system (tank + drainfield)

How a septic tank works (layers, baffles, optional effluent filter)

Why Septic Inspections Matter

Sensitive use properties host children and vulnerable occupants. A septic malfunction can quickly create health risks (sewage backup, exposure to pathogens), cause odours and facility disruption, and damage the system and surrounding environment. Routine walk-through checks catch early warning signs (slow drains, gurgling, alarms, odours, wet/soft ground) so issues can be escalated before an emergency occurs.

Key risk triggers to watch for

- Sewage backup indoors or surfacing/ponding outdoors (treat as an emergency).
- Persistent sewage odour indoors/outdoors; new wet or soft ground over the tank/drainfield.
- Repeated slow drains, gurgling, or recurring clogs (especially in multiple fixtures).
- Alarm or fault light on pump/advanced treatment control panel.
- Vehicles/equipment driving over the drainfield; roof/sump water discharging to the bed.

Safety rules for staff (daily checks)

- Do NOT open septic lids/covers. Only trained/authorized service providers should open lids.
- Keep children and the public away from septic components (tank lids/risers, cleanouts, vents, pump chambers, drainfield).
- If you observe sewage backup or surfacing, restrict access (cones/tape) and notify your supervisor immediately.

Checklist 1 — Daily Septic System Check (Staff / Custodial)

Time required: 8–10 minutes. Do not open lids/covers. Record facts only.

Header (complete each day)

Facility / Address	_____
Date	_____
Time	_____
Completed by (name/role)	_____
Weather / Recent rainfall (Y/N)	_____

Septic type (if known): Gravity / Pumped / Advanced / Unknown _____

Alarm/control panel location (if known): _____

A) Indoor check (2–3 minutes)

✓	Inspection item
☐	Toilets flush normally (no slow flush, rising water, repeated clogs).
☐	Sinks/tubs drain normally (no slow drains).
☐	No gurgling sounds from drains/toilets.
☐	No sewage odour indoors (washrooms, kitchen, utility areas, near floor drains).
☐	Floor drains / low points (if accessible) are dry and clear.

Indoor notes: _____

B) Alarm / control panel (if applicable)

✓	Inspection item
☐	Panel shows NORMAL status (no alarm light/buzzer/fault message).
☐	If alarm is present: record the exact message/light and report the same day.

Alarm details (exact message/light): _____

C) Outdoor walk-around (5 minutes) — do not open lids

✓	Inspection item
☐	Area is safe to access; keep children away from septic components.
☐	Tank/access area: lids/risers appear secure; no strong odour; no wet/soft ground or pooling.
☐	Pump/treatment area (if present): dry; no leaks; vents intact; no unusual noise/vibration.
☐	Drainfield/leaching bed: firm ground; no ponding/breakout; no sewage odour.
☐	Vegetation appears normal (no sudden lush/bright green stripes over bed).
☐	No vehicles/equipment stored or driven on the drainfield; no discharge to ditches/low areas.
☐	Downspouts/sump discharge directed away from tank and drainfield.

Outdoor notes: _____

D) Daily reminders (preventive)

✓	Inspection item
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☐	No wipes/paper towels/diapers or other non-flush items in toilets.
☐	No grease/oil/food scraps into sinks (wipe dishes/pans before washing).
☐	No harsh chemicals/solvents/paint into drains (use approved cleaners only).
☐	Report running toilets or dripping taps immediately (excess water overloads systems).

E) Issues found today (complete only if any concern)

Location	_____
Severity (circle)	Normal / Watch / Report Today / Emergency
Reported to	_____
Time	_____
Work order / ticket #	_____
What you observed (facts only)	_____

Checklist 2 — Septic Incident / Concern Log (Use when something is flagged)

Use this log when a concern or alarm is identified. Record facts only (what/where/when).

Facility / Address	_____
Week of	_____
Prepared by	_____

Date/Time	Location	Observation (facts only)	Status	Reported to	Action / Ticket # / Initials

Status definitions (circle one in log):

- NORMAL — No odours, no slow drains, no alarms, no wet areas.
- WATCH — Minor concern; re-check next day; report if repeated/worsening.
- REPORT TODAY — Persistent odour, repeated slow drains/gurgling, alarm, or new wet/soft area.
Notify supervisor same day.
- EMERGENCY — Sewage backup indoors or surfacing/breakout outdoors. Restrict area; notify supervisor immediately; urgent service call.

Checklist 3 — Septic Tank Servicing Checklist (Licensed Service Provider)

For scheduled servicing/pumping and periodic inspections at sensitive use properties. Follow your company procedures, regulatory requirements, and site rules. This checklist supports consistent documentation and safe site close-out.

Upon arrival / site control

✓	Inspection item
☐	Notify facility management upon arrival and confirm service scope and access.
☐	Confirm the area is clear and controlled (restrict public access; place cones/barriers as needed).
☐	Verify you can proceed; do not take action until management is aware of your presence.
☐	Review available site photos/as-builts for orientation and access points (when provided).
☐	Confirm you are aware of surroundings (traffic, children, trip hazards, overhead lines, pets).
☐	Stage tools/materials first. Do not open any lids until set-up and site control are complete.
☐	If leaving the tank area at any time, ensure lids are secured before stepping away.

Servicing / inspection steps

✓	Inspection item
☐	Inspect condition of all lids/risers; note cracks, corrosion, missing fasteners, trip hazards.
☐	Confirm locks on lids are working (if applicable).
☐	Ensure access openings have safety screens installed (where required).
☐	Confirm safety screens are in good condition (seated, intact, load-rated, handle intact).
☐	Visually inspect tank condition (baffles, inlet/outlet, effluent filter if present); note issues.
☐	Visually inspect tank area and drainfield for signs of failure (odour, wet/soft ground, breakout).
☐	Complete required service activity (pump-out/cleaning/filter service) per manufacturer and regulations.
☐	Reinstall lids with all screws/fasteners installed; confirm lids are secure and locked.
☐	Confirm gate/fence is locked (if present) and site is safe for re-opening.

Documentation / close-out

✓	Inspection item
☐	Take photos of secured lids/locks/gates upon completion (and any deficiencies found).
☐	Clean area with water if appropriate and permitted; leave no debris.
☐	Document any issues and provide written notice to owner/manager before leaving.
☐	Request written response/acknowledgement from owner/manager within 24 hours for any deficiencies.
☐	If there is no response after reasonable attempts, notify the local authority having jurisdiction (as required).

Additional considerations (lids, risers, fencing)

✓	Inspection item
☐	If lids are concrete or otherwise non-compliant, provide details/quotation for upgrade to

	risers, secure lids, and safety screens.
☐	Confirm septic lids are located within a locked gated/fenced area (recommended for sensitive sites); notify owner/manager if absent.



Example: safety screen installed within riser to prevent entry if lid is removed/damaged (illustrative).

Recommended service frequency (minimums)

- Septic tank pump-out/service: at least every 2 years for sensitive use properties (or more often based on usage and professional measurements).
- Effluent filter (if present): clean/service every 6 months (or per manufacturer/service provider).
- Advanced/pumped systems (pumps, floats, alarms, mechanical components): inspect at least annually and maintain a service contract.

Final rule: IS THE SITE SAFE? Never leave the site in an unsafe condition.

Quick Reference — What To Do When You See a Problem

Use this decision guide with the Daily Checklist and Incident Log.

If you observe...	Then...	Priority
Sewage backup inside the building; sewage on the ground (breakout/ponding).	Restrict access immediately. Notify supervisor/management right away. Call licensed septic service urgently.	EMERGENCY
Alarm/fault on panel; repeated slow drains/gurgling; persistent odour.	Record exact alarm/message and symptoms. Notify supervisor same day. Arrange service call.	REPORT TODAY
New minor odour outside with no wet area; single slow drain once.	Re-check next day; increase awareness of water use; if repeated, escalate.	WATCH
No symptoms.	Continue daily checks and good practices (do not flush wipes/grease; manage water use).	NORMAL

References (for training/awareness)

- US EPA — How to Care for Your Septic System (inspection/pumping, what not to flush).
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) — SepticSmart: Understanding Your Home Wastewater System (warning signs and basics).

Note: Adapt these checklists to your site-specific system type (gravity, pumped, advanced treatment) and any manufacturer maintenance requirements.