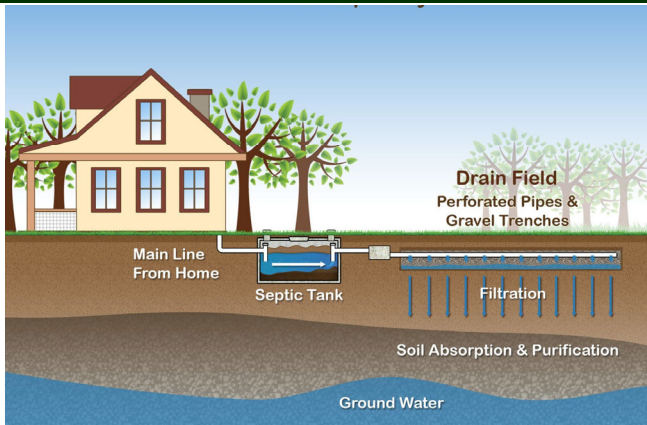


Septic Systems (SSTS) FAQ's



Land use requirements pertaining to septic systems in Crow Wing County are outlined in the Crow Wing County Land Use Ordinance and Minnesota Rule 7080-7083, which are available on our website.

Please consult the Land Use Ordinance and MN Rule 7080-7083 for further information on requirements and regulations or contact our office with any questions or comments. We look forward to working with you.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How do I get a permit to install a septic system?

Contact a state-licensed septic system designer to determine the appropriate system size and location for your property. After working with you, the designer will submit a design to Land Services for review. Once your design is approved by Land Services, you can submit an application with the appropriate fee. Landowners and contractors can apply for permits online (<https://cwc.powerappsportals.us>) or in person (322 Laurel Street, Brainerd).

A fee schedule and a list of designers are available in our office and on our website @ www.crowwing.gov

2. What do I need to do after I obtain a permit?

Unless the homeowner is installing the system, the responsibility generally shifts to the septic system installer. It is required that the installer contact Land Services for an inspection 24 hours prior to covering the system. Once the inspection is approved, a certificate of installation will be issued. See Crow Wing County Land Use Ordinance Article 37.26 B for more details.

3. Do I need a permit to replace my pump, baffle or manhole cover?

A permit is not needed in Crow Wing County for septic system maintenance such as pump replacement, manhole lid replacement, pipe repair, and filter cleaning/replacement. If you are unsure, please call Land Services and we will gladly answer your questions.

4. What is a compliance inspection?

A compliance inspection is used to determine if a septic system meets local and state requirements. The inspection must be conducted by a state-licensed inspector. The inspector will have the septic tank(s) pumped and will inspect the septic tank(s) to determine if they are watertight. The inspector reviews the drainfield to ensure it has the minimum required vertical separation between the bottom of the drainfield and the periodically saturated soil or bedrock. Additionally, the inspector checks to see if the system is functioning properly overall. If the inspection passes, a certificate of compliance is issued.

5. When do I need a compliance inspection?

A compliance inspection is required for all permit applications within the shoreland district. A compliance inspection is also required for any permit application outside of the shoreland district if the application is for a dwelling, any living space or for an accessory structure with sewage generating fixtures. Property transfers and other applications such as public hearings and administrative subdivisions also require a compliance inspection. A compliance inspection is valid for 3 years from the date of issuance.

6. How can my system be failing?

Often times we hear of systems "working" or that homeowners have never had a problem with the system despite the fact that an inspector just failed it. A septic system is not only considered failing if it is discharging to the ground surface or backing up into a dwelling, but it can also be failing if the bottom of the drainfield has less than the required vertical separation distance from the water table or any other restricting layer. See Article 37.13

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Top 10 things you can do to keep your septic system maintained:

1. Have your septic system inspected every 3 years by a certified septic professional.
2. Have your septic tank pumped every 3 years or as outlined in the original septic design
3. Avoid pouring harsh products down the drain (oils, grease, chemicals, paint, medications, etc.)
4. Discard non degradable products in the trash instead of flushing them (floss, disposable wipes, cat litter and women's products)
5. Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank.
6. Limit use of household cleaners such as bleach.
7. Repair leaks and use water efficient fixtures to avoid overloading them.
8. Maintain plants and vegetation near the system to ensure roots do not block drains.
9. Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable and low or phosphate-free
10. Prevent system freezing during cold weather by inspecting and insulating vulnerable system parts (inspection pipe and soil treatment area). Below are a few ideas to help prevent freezing. More can be found on the University of Minnesota web site.
 - A. Do not mow the grass over the top of the drainfield in the fall
 - B. Spread 8-12 inches of loose leaves, hay, or straw on top of the drainfield, tank(s), and the pipes going to and from the tank(s).
 - C. Do not drive over the system.
 - D. If you are going to be gone for more than 2 days, have a friend or neighbor stop over periodically and use an appliance such as a dishwasher to inject warmth into the system.