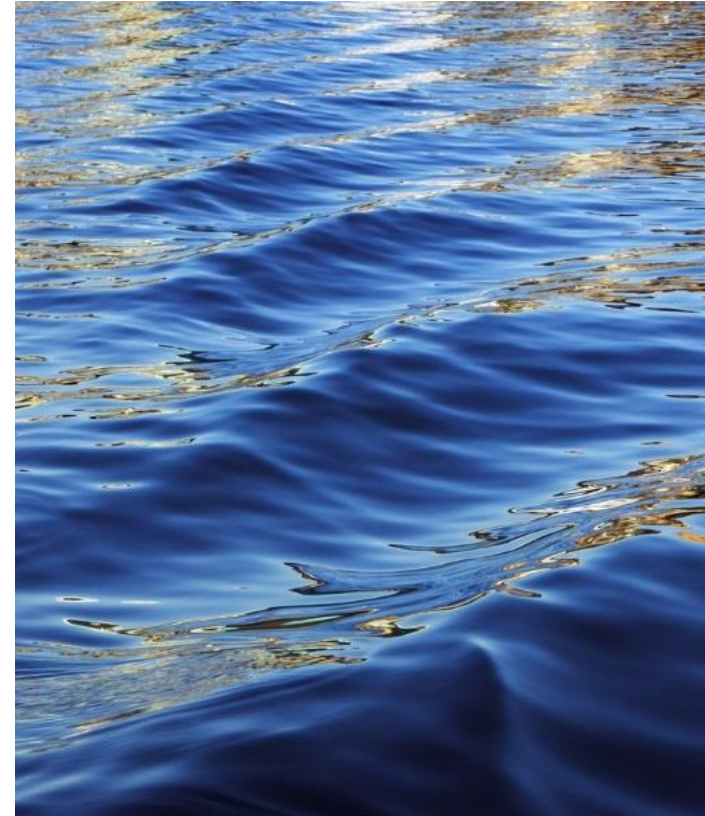




Septic System Replacement Grants

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Tompkins County Whole Health



Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

- Approximately 25% of the homes in America use an OWTS system to process gray and black water produced in the home.
- Typical layout of an OWTS
- Septic tank
 - solids settle to the bottom
 - Oils and greases float to the top
 - Bacteria can start the breakdown of some of the organic material
 - Water and dissolved materials, now called effluent, leave the tank
- The effluent then goes to a distribution box and is separated into several lateral pipes that lead to an absorption bed (commonly called a leach field)
 - From there the effluent percolates through the soil for further treatment

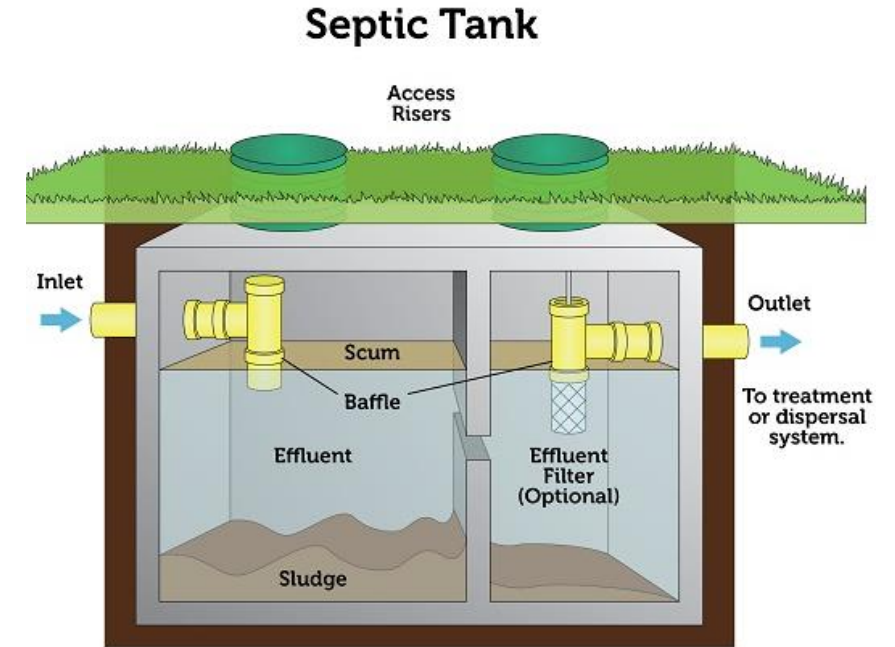


Image Source: Produced by Agricultural Communications, The Texas A&M University System, EPA

OWTS failures

- Homeowners are encouraged to properly use and care for their septic systems to prolong life expectancy, but failures are bound to occur at some point either through misuse or age
- The EPA estimates over 50% of systems are 30 years old or older and that 10-20% of systems are in “failure”, which can range from leaky septic tanks, broken distribution boxes, plugged absorption field pipes, or overloaded soils.
- These failures can allow effluent to leach into the soil and reach groundwater sources, or even reach the surface and run into surface waters directly before it has time to be processed.



SAVE THE DATE!
SepticSmart Week
2023
September 18-22, 2023

Get Ready For SepticSmart Week!

EPA's annual event, centered on encouraging homeowners and communities to care for and maintain their septic systems.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/septic

The poster features the EPA logo in the top right corner and a cartoon illustration of a smiling man in a green shirt, blue pants, and a blue cap, holding a clipboard. The background is split into a yellow left half and a light blue right half.

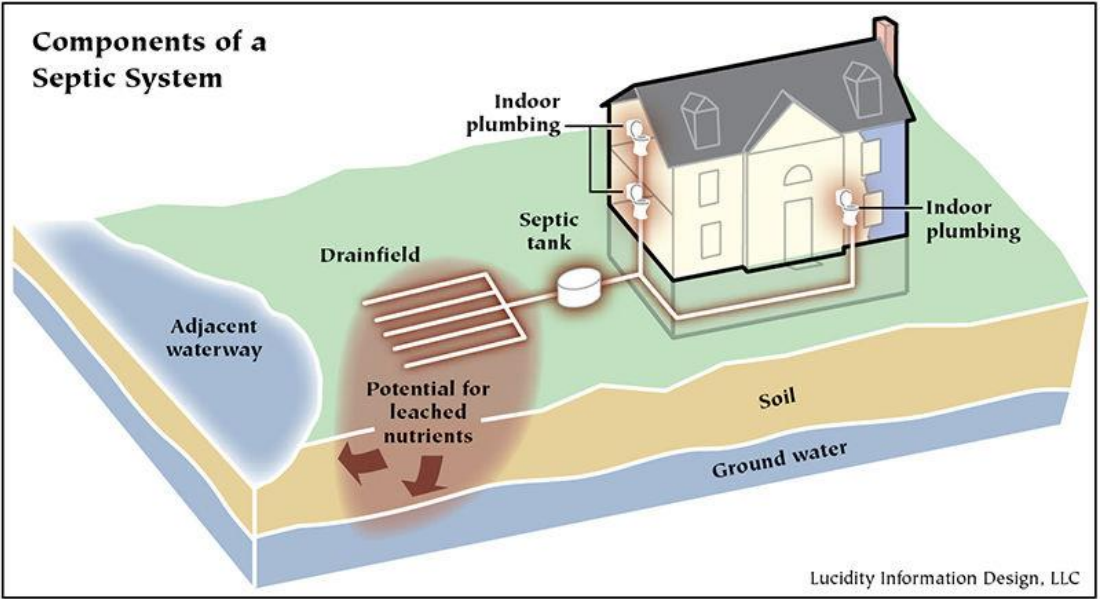


Dye from a dye test surfacing in a ditch

Failed systems can have long lasting impacts on the environment and the homeowner

- The nutrients, as well as the pathogens, in the untreated effluent have the potential to negatively impact the environment and human health

- Unfortunately, the cost of repairs and/or system replacements range from \$15,000 - \$30,000, or more, which can be a very large financial burden on homeowners



Grants managed by Tompkins County to help offset replacement costs

CDBG – Community Development Block Grant

- From the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Started in 2020, ended Aug 2023
- Managed by Thoma Development Consultants in Cortland, NY
- County was awarded \$855,000
- By the end of the grant we were able to fully fund the partial or complete replacement of 37 systems
 - Average payout was about \$18,000

Septic System Replacement Fund

- From the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation
- EFC and DOH determined priority geographic areas
- Homes within 250' of the lake are eligible
- Covers up to 50% (up to a maximum of \$10,000) of eligible septic system replacement costs
- Started in 2018 and is ongoing
- Currently have helped offset the costs for 24 projects