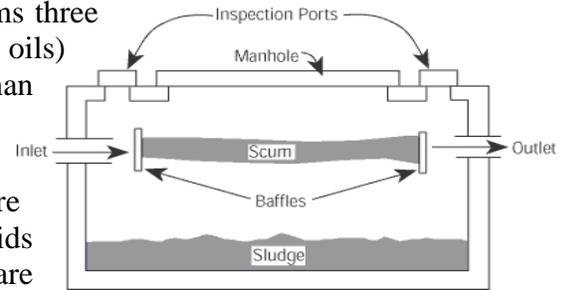




**Licking County Health Department ---Environmental Division**  
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## **Septic Tank & Dry Well --- Factsheet**

- **Septic Tank:** A septic tank is a major component of a HSTS system. The tank is made of concrete, fiberglass, or pvc and contains baffles and tees at the inlet and outlet points. The port opening should have a riser to grade or above grade of the lawn. The septic tank holds the wastewater in the tank long enough for solids and liquids to separate. The wastewater forms three layers inside the tank. Sediments lighter than water (greases & oils) float to the top forming a layer of scum. Sediments heavier than water settle at the bottom of the tank forming a layer of sludge. This leaves a middle layer of partially clarified wastewater. The layers of sludge and scum remain in the septic tank where bacteria found naturally in the wastewater work to break the solids down. The sludge and scum that cannot be broken down are retained in the tank until the tank is pumped.



- **Dry Well:** The wastewater exits the septic tank and enters a distribution box (d-box) or bull-run valve. Some older dry well systems may not have a distribution device. The wastewater is then distributed into a dry well. A dry well is a prefabricated concrete tank with uniform holes throughout, or could be manmade out of laying up bricks or blocks. Dry wells were either installed as halves, usually two or one full dry well. The outside of the dry well was surrounded by gravel. The gravel and soil act as biological filters. As the wastewater moves through the soil to the ground water the filtration process and organisms in the soil work to remove toxins, bacteria, viruses and other pollutants. Some homes have 1 or more dry wells and some homes have drywells used in conjunction with leaching. The dry well may also have a riser or inspection port to grade with the surface. Similar to a septic tank a dry well may be pumped out if needed.

➤ **\*\*Dry wells are no longer allowed to be installed as part of a HSTS system. \*\***

### **Signs that your system is not functioning properly:**

- ✓ Septic odor    Wet area in yard
- ✓ Drains discharging slowly
- ✓ Tank overflowing

### **Septic Tank Sizing:**

Bedrooms	Gallons
1-2	1,000
3	1,500 two tanks or compartments
4-5	2,000 two tanks or compartments
6 or more	1,000 plus 250 for each bedroom two tanks or compartments

- **The Licking County Health Department recommends the following activities to keep your septic system working correctly:**

- Have your septic tank pumped every 3 years
- Do not place any buildings or other structures on top of your system
- Keep downspout and sump pump drains away from your system
- Repair any faucet or toilet leaks to avoid adding extra water to your system