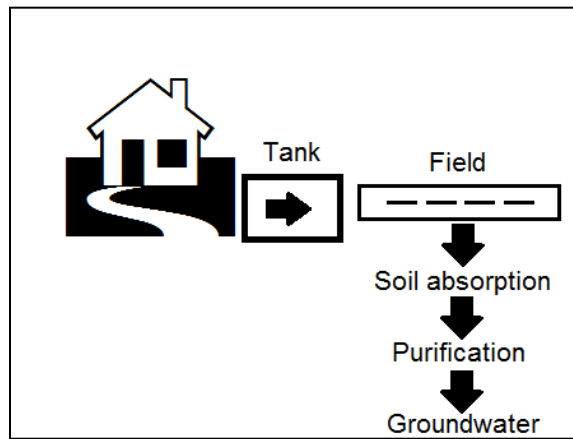




**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Knox County Health Department

## Applying For A Septic Permit

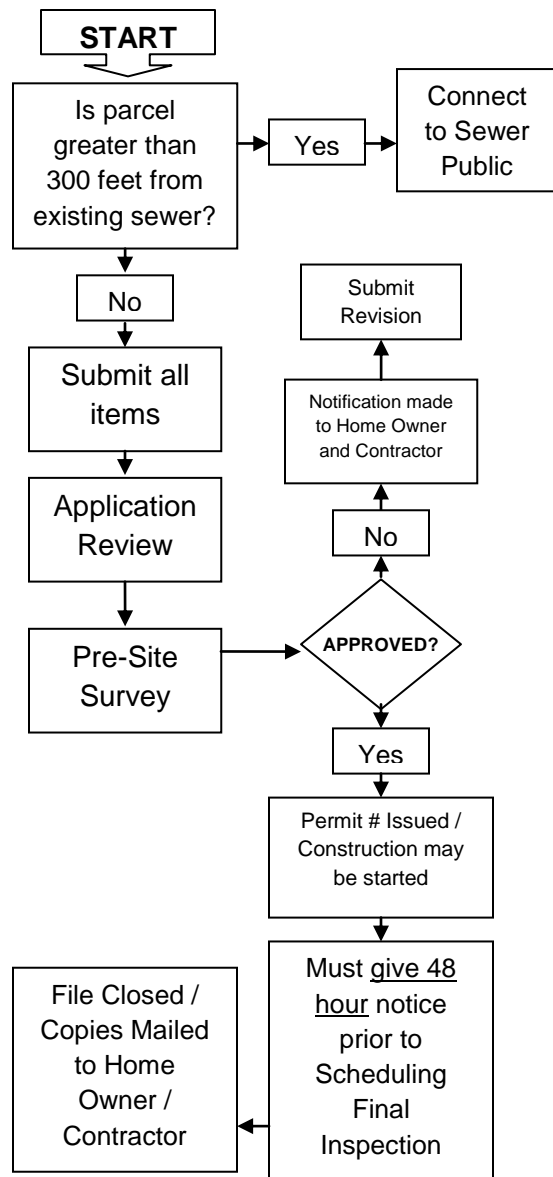


### Items to be submitted with application:

- Soil Boring Report (Soil Science Investigation)
- Application with:
  - Homeowner Signature
  - System Design Information & Sketch
- Fee (check only)

Application may be found at  
[www.knoxcountyhealth.org](http://www.knoxcountyhealth.org)

### Permit Process



Health Department maintains copies and copies given to owner

### When do you need a septic permit?

A permit is required before a system is installed, repaired, extended, or replaced. Call the health department prior to starting any work.

### Who can design a septic system?

- Licensed Professional Engineer
- Private Sewage System Contractor
- Home owner

A list of contractors are available at the health department and on our website

### Who can install a septic system?

- Private Sewage System Contractor
- Home owner

### How long does it take to get a septic permit?

Staff typically complete initial review and pre-site inspection for isolation distances and other requirements within 3-5 working days.

Additional time may be required if revisions are necessary

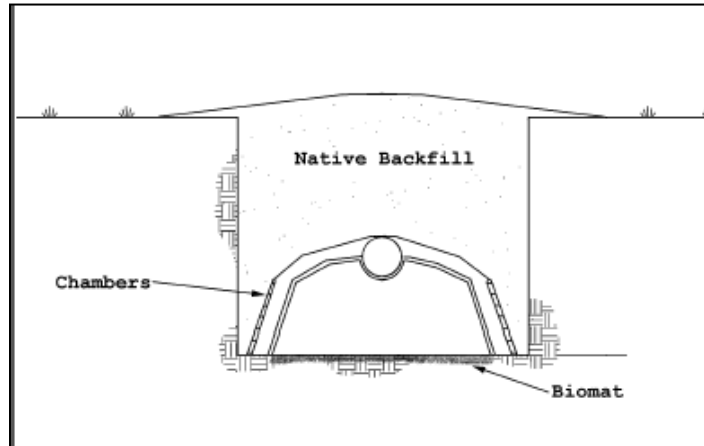
### How do I schedule a septic inspection?

Contact the health department **at least 48 hours** in advance to schedule an inspection.

### What if I decide to cancel my permit?

Cancellation must be submitted in writing. Fees are non-refundable.

## Septic System 101



1. All water runs out of your house from one main drainage pipe into a septic tank.
2. The septic tank is a buried, water-tight container usually made of concrete, fiberglass, or polyethylene. Its job is to hold the wastewater long enough to allow solids to settle down to the bottom (forming sludge), while the oil and grease floats to the top (as scum).

Compartments and a T-shaped outlet prevent the sludge and scum from leaving the tank and traveling into the drain field area.

3. The liquid wastewater (effluent) then exits the tank into the drain field. If the drain field is overloaded with too much liquid, it will flood, causing sewage to flow to the

ground surface or create backups in toilets and sinks.

4. Finally, the wastewater percolates into the soil, naturally removing harmful coliform bacteria, viruses, and nutrients.

## Signs of System Failure

A foul odor isn't always the first sign of a malfunctioning septic system. Call a septic contractor if you notice any of the following:

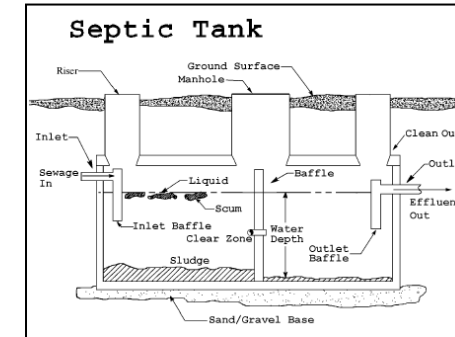
- Wastewater backing up into household drains.
- Bright green, spongy grass on the drain field, even during dry weather.
- Pooling water or muddy soil around your septic system or in your basement.
- A strong odor around the septic tank and drain field.

## Selling a Home?

As soon as you know you'll be listing a property with a well or septic, request records from the health department to avoid delays. **Allow 3-5 business days for record retrieval.**

If you plan on testing the well for bacteria and nitrates, start the process early, as results may take **7-10 business days** and **may take weeks to clear the system of any contaminants.**

## Septic System Installed



## Good Record Keeping

Keep records of your final installation inspection, design of your system, and maintenance records for future use. Records will help inform decisions on landscaping, changes, repairs, or selling the property. **Record keeping is required by law!**

## Annual Maintenance

A list of contractors is available on our website, call and ask about annual maintenance and periodic septic tank pumping. Pumping is recommended every 3-5 years. **Every system is required to be evaluated every 3-5 years, Aerobic Treatment Units every 6 months by law!**

## Landscaping

Ask about our root system brochure to learn about what plants to use and not use.

Remember... Good maintenance means, Good for your wallet, Good for your health, and Good for the environment!