

# Conventional Systems

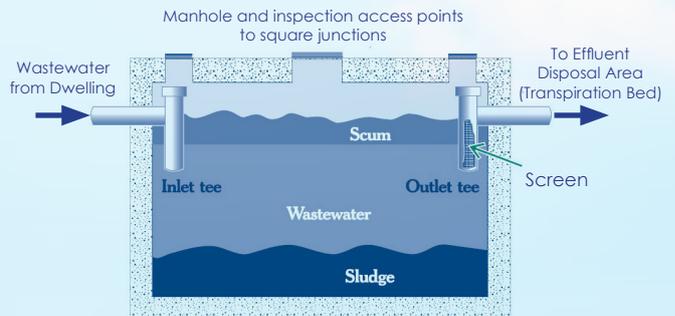
## What is a Conventional System?

A conventional system typically consists of a septic tank and transpiration bed or trench.

## How does a Septic Tank Work?

A septic tank is a structurally sound watertight tank. All wastewater (including greywater and blackwater) from a household enters the septic tank where primary treatment of the wastewater occurs through the settling of solids and the floatation of fats and greases. Most of the solids settle to the bottom of the tank and are retained in the tank forming a sludge layer, whilst fats and greases collect at the top in a scum layer.

## TYPICAL SEPTIC TANK CROSS SECTION



Bacteria in the septic tank break down the solid matter in the sludge and scum layers. Material that cannot be fully broken down gradually builds up in the tank and must be pumped out by a licenced contractor periodically.

## What is a transpiration bed?

Wastewater that has been treated in a septic tank can only be applied to the land through a covered soil absorption or transpiration system, as the effluent is still too contaminated for above ground or near surface irrigation.

The effluent flows through perforated pipes into a lined gravel bed, covered with turf. The water is removed by evaporation and transpiration through the grasses.



# Do Your Part, Be Septic Smart

## The Do's and Don'ts of your Septic System

### Keep it protected - get it inspected

#### ✓ DO

- Learn the location, layout and operational and maintenance requirements of your system
- Have your septic tank de-sludged by a licenced contractor every 3-5 years
- Ensure that your Council approval to operate a sewage management system inspection is not overdue

### Think at the sink

#### ✗ DON'T

- Pour grease, fats or harmful chemicals including bleaches, disinfectants, whiteners and nappy soakers down your sink

#### ✓ DO

- Use water efficiently
- Fix household leaks
- Check household products for suitability for use in septic systems
- Have your grease trap (if installed) cleaned out every 2 months

### Don't put anything funny down your dunny

#### ✗ DON'T

- Allow any foreign materials such as nappies, disposable wipes, sanitary products or any other personal items to be flushed down the toilet

#### ✓ DO

- Dispose of all non-degradable products in the rubbish bin

### Shield your field

#### ✗ DON'T

- Allow vehicles to drive on to or park on your disposal field
- Allow stock to graze on your disposal field
- Plant large trees on or near your disposal field
- Plant any consumable foods on or near your disposal field
- Allow children or pets to play on your disposal field

#### ✓ DO

- Construct and maintain stormwater diversion drains upslope of your disposal area
- Level any depressions with good quality top soil
- Keep the grass regularly mowed
- Fence your land application area and keep animals, children and vehicles out

### Don't strain your drain

#### ✗ DON'T

- Shock load your system by using your dishwasher, shower or bath and washing machine at the same time

#### ✓ DO

- Stagger the use of water generating appliances
- Consider installing water efficient fixtures and fittings



Do Your Part - Be Septic Smart

For more information phone  
Camden Council on 4654 7777