

How to Care For Your Aquarobic Septic

(Please note: Even if you don't have an Aquarobic septic system, much of the following valuable information will still be of great benefit to the functioning of any type of septic.)

Your Aquarobic Septic System

Your Aquarobic, or similar type aerobic septic system, is a small, on-site sewage treatment and disposal system that depends on beneficial bacteria to function efficiently. It has been designed to decompose organic material using oxygen and the natural bacteria normally present in domestic sewage. An Aquarobic system has some unique features to break down the waste and safely allow it to leach into the soil. It generally consists of an aerobic tank, a blower, a pump, 3 floats, filters and a panel with an electrical timer for cycles of aeration and pumping. Regular care and maintenance of this system twice annually will ensure continued optimum conditions and will prevent premature failure of its various components and your septic leaching bed/drain field.

Regular Maintenance – Some Do's and Don'ts

Do's

DO encourage grass to grow over the septic field as it helps disperse water.

DO keep all types of vehicles and heavy equipment off the septic system and the drain field as they can break the piping, housing or cover and cause extensive damage.

DO keep the manway cover on and be sure not to block it to prevent excess water from entering.

DO install new water-saving toilets, faucets and showerheads to reduce up to 40% water usage.

DO put grease, fats and oils in a container in the garbage and wipe off your plates. Although your system can break down limited quantities, they take a huge amount of oxygen and may take years to decompose. They will eventually plug the pores in the soil and seal up the drain field.

DO use natural soaps and cleaners as much as possible. Your system can handle a small amount of regular or antibacterial soaps and cleaners but regular use interferes with the natural bacterial breakdown of the sewage, or effluent, and can cause foaming and odour problems. The worst culprits for this are liquid fabric softeners and bleach. We recommend using natural detergents and dryer sheets or wool dryer balls.

DO remember that your system has the capacity to accept *temporary* additional loadings such as small to medium parties, but excessive overuse needs to be discussed for options.

DO use potassium chloride salts for your water softener. Regular water softener salts may act like liquid fabric softener to your system. Windsor Salts and Sifto Canada are two major producers of potassium chloride salts. Saltless water softeners or metered water softeners are other options.

DO use regular toilet paper and not extra thick, extra soft or extra absorbent as it is too dense and cannot be broken down quickly enough.

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DON'TS

DON'T alter the septic bed by adding fill or landscaping, patios, decks, sheds, pools, etc. This will result in bed saturation and eventually complete failure.

DON'T put non-biodegradable materials down the toilets or drains. Non-biodegradable items include any plastics, rubber, facial tissue, paper towels, personal hygiene products, condoms, toys, cigarette butts, hair, etc. They will plug up the baffle and could also clog the pump which could lead to more expense.

DON'T allow running-on toilets or dripping faucets to discharge into your system. It adds up to hundreds of gallons of water which may overload your system and the septic bed, resulting in damage to the system's components or even to the breakdown of the septic bed itself. Most septic problems we see are due to this.

DON'T let any harsh chemicals get into your septic. They kill the bacteria necessary for efficient treatment of waste. This includes chemicals such as turpentine, paint, acid and even bleach.

DON'T let roof/gutter water, sump pump discharge water or surface run-off enter your septic.

DON'T do laundry or use excessive water during heavy rainfall or quickly melting snow. The ground, and your septic bed, will already be over saturated and unable to process any further waste water which could lead to a sewage backup.

DON'T connect any other electrical load to the breaker feeding the system as it will cause damage to the pumps and controls.

DON'T shut off system when going away on weekends or on holidays. The system is designed to function on its own maintaining odour-free operation. For an extended time away, please contact us.

DON'T attempt to repair any part of the system yourself. We are trained and experienced to repair your system safely with the proper procedures and materials.

Note: Garbage disposals are not recommended for septic systems as they can biologically overload the system and can increase sludge/solids by up to 40%. If you feel you must have one, it is recommended that you do not insert any bones, fats, pasta, rice, potatoes (starches), or stringy vegetables like celery.

Service Calls

The Ontario Building Code and Ministry of Environment state that septic systems must be operated in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. Most systems require a minimum

annual or semi-annual inspection/maintenance. Our companies, Plumb Perfect Ltd. and Lamoureux Mechanical Service Ltd., have been authorized Aquarobic service dealers/contractors since 1992 and are therefore trained in all aspects of inspections, diagnostic and corrective procedures, repairs and certified parts replacement. A typical service call for your Aquarobic system includes the following:

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- *Checking the light functions and replacing bulbs when necessary*
- *Inspecting the condition of the electrical panel*
- *Checking the timer and resetting if necessary*
- *Inspecting the wiring and circuit breaker*
- *Checking the discharge level and establishing that the water volume relates to established usage*
- *Listening for running water which could indicate inside plumbing problems*
- *Cleaning, checking and testing the floats to ensure they are in good working condition*
- *Checking the discharge pump to see if it is free and clear of debris and is functioning at optimum level. Removal and safe disposal of any debris*
- *Removing old filter(s) and installing new ones*
- *Checking the blower for any unusual damage, heat or noise*
- *Checking blower amperage and diffusion action*
- *Checking and clearing the baffle(s) if needed*
- *Checking for any sign of loose or missing nuts or clamps and adjusting or replacing as necessary*
- *Checking that all visible pipes are in good condition*
- *Checking the surrounding area for any current or potential problems*
- *And more...*

After the service/inspection, your technician will discuss his findings with you and advise you on any essential repairs, system care or if your tank needs to be pumped out. Depending on the size and type of Aquarobic system, number of people in household, and your cooperation with respect to the above "Do's and Don'ts", routine service should be performed one to four times per year. Twice a year, preferably in spring and fall, is the minimum recommended by the manufacturer AquaO2 (formerly Aquarobic International) and our Aquarobic specialist. With proper care your system can remain trouble free and your bed will last many years longer, saving you money.

Please note: *Your Aquarobic system is designed to function normally after a brief period of power loss, such as a 'brown-out'. Black-outs however, interrupt the timer's cycles and should be serviced as soon as possible afterwards to restore normal function and to prevent problems.*

Signs of Trouble

The #1 problem encountered by homeowners is a full septic tank. This is most often due to leaking plumbing fixtures, non-biodegradable materials getting into the system, blocked system components or overuse of chemicals. Most times the tank does not need to be pumped out, the system just needs to be serviced.

Following are some of the signs of trouble which indicate professional service is needed:

- *Septic alarm is ringing and/or the red light is on*
- *Waste water/effluent is backing up inside the home*
- *Effluent backing up outside the home*
- *Foul odours inside or outside*
- *Toilets, sinks or showers draining slowly*
- *Gurgling sound or water coming up any sink, bathtub, shower or toilet, particularly after flushing a toilet or doing laundry*
- *Blower is noisy or other noises coming from system*
- *Power has been out for an extended period of time*
- *Lawn on or around the septic bed is spongy or filled with water*
- *Extra growth of grass over the septic bed*
- *Manway cover is missing or broken allowing water, debris or animals into the system*

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Please call us as soon as possible if you are experiencing any of the above signs and refrain from using large amounts of water such as doing laundry, using the dishwasher, taking long showers or watering the lawn or garden so as to prevent any damage to your system and your home.

Recommended Products

Bio-Clean: Nothing on the market is more effective for biodegrading waste in septic systems than Bio-Clean. The essential bacteria in this product feed on waste matter and change it into water, carbon dioxide and other elements that run harmlessly out of your septic system. These natural, beneficial bacteria clean the system which reduces the need for service and septic pump outs. Bio-Clean can extend the life of your septic bed, saving you thousands of dollars. Used in the home, Bio-Clean is highly effective in preventing clogged drains such as in kitchen sinks, vanity sinks, floor drains, bathtub and shower drains and laundry tubs. Bio-Clean has proven to be the safest, most economical and environmentally friendly product on the market.

Biodegradable Cleaning Products: Vinegar and baking soda can clean about 70% of your home safely and economically, but there are also many biodegradable products available, such as Nature Clean, Method, Ecos to name a few. Most grocery stores and health food stores carry septic-friendly, natural cleaning products.

Nature's Own by Sifto Canada: Potassium Chloride salts are recommended if you have a water softener and can be found at Canadian Tire. Other brands of Potassium Chloride salts are also available at hardware stores and selected water softener suppliers.

With regular care and professional maintenance your Aquarobic septic system will give you years of care free service.

Our companies, Plumb Perfect Ltd. and Lamoureux Mechanical Service Ltd., are fully licensed and insured plumbing contractors specializing in all residential, commercial and rural plumbing repairs, maintenance and installations since 1983. From leaking faucets and clogged drains to hot water heaters, septics, wells and everything in between, we have the right technician with the right skills and equipment to get the job done.

For your safety, our certified technicians have to pass background checks and regularly receive training/upgrading to serve you better. We are also registered with the BBB and have an A+ rating.

We are confident that you will be happy with our professionalism, integrity and our written warranties. For your convenience we accept Visa, MasterCard, Debit and Cash.

If you require any of our services, please call to book an exact appointment that works around your schedule. Our regular hours are Monday to Saturday, 8:30 – 5:00. We are also available evenings, Sundays and Holidays for emergency calls.

For further information about our company and services, please visit www.plumbperfect.ca or call our friendly customer care rep at **1-888-458-1979**.