

Septic Tank Inspection

A septic tank and sewage treatment plant inspection: system and discharge, tank and lid, sludge, desludging date and waste carrier, baffles, pumps and alarms, the drainage field and signs of pollution.

1. System

Project

Client

Site *

Site address

Inspection date *

Time

Owner or operator responsible for the system *

Inspected by *

System * (choose one)

☐ Septic tank ☐ Small sewage treatment plant ☐ Cesspool (no discharge)

Discharges to (choose one)

☐ Ground through a drainage field

☐ Surface water (a watercourse)

☐ Nowhere (holding tank)

If applicable: A septic tank must not discharge to a watercourse. Under the general binding rules, as soon as possible connect to a public foul sewer, replace the tank with a small sewage treatment plant, or install a drainage field, with plans to do the work within a reasonable time, usually 12 months.

If applicable: General binding rules (England). The sludge must be removed before it goes beyond the maximum capacity, and the guidance says to do this at least once a year or in line with the manufacturer's instructions, using a registered waste carrier. The system must be repaired or replaced if it is not in good working order. These rules apply in England only. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own rules: check with Natural Resources Wales, SEPA or the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Is the discharge point within 50 m of a private drinking water supply, or in a groundwater source protection zone 1? (if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No

If applicable: A discharge to ground in a source protection zone 1 (other than SPZ1c) needs an environmental permit from the Environment Agency. An SPZ1 can also be any area within 50 m of a private water supply for human consumption.

Weather capture

Digital form: use Record current conditions. On paper, record date/time, temperature (°C), wind (mph and direction), conditions and source. Keep observed conditions separate from forecast estimates.

2. Tank

Tank position (GPS)

Stand over the tank lids and tap Mark current location. Buried tanks are easy to lose under a lawn, and the pin helps the next visit and the emptying tanker. Mark current location works on web forms today; the app version is on its way.

Could the tank be opened and inspected?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Lids and covers (choose one)

☐ Sound and secure ☐ Damaged ☐ Missing

Sludge level (choose one)

☐ Low ☐ Moderate ☐ Near capacity ☐ Over capacity

Date last desludged

Days since desludging (if applicable; worked out automatically in the app)

If applicable: More than a year since the tank was desludged.

If applicable: The desludging date is after the inspection date. Check the dates.

Was it emptied by a registered waste carrier?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Next desludge due

At least once a year under the general binding rules guidance, or as the manufacturer says.

Days to the next desludge (if applicable; worked out automatically in the app)

If applicable: The next desludge date is before the date of this record. Check the date.

Tank defects (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Cracks in tank walls
- ☐ Leaks
- ☐ Damaged inlet or outlet baffles
- ☐ Blocked pipes
- ☐ Roots in the tank
- ☐ None seen

Motor, pump and alarm (treatment plant) (choose one)

☐ Working ☐ Fault ☐ Not applicable

Photos of the tank (photos: attach, or note the file names)

3. Drainage field and pollution

Drainage field or outlet (GPS) (if applicable)

Mark the distribution chamber and each end of the drainage field, or the outlet to the watercourse, one point at a time.

Signs at the drainage field or outlet (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Pools of water
- ☐ Sewage smells
- ☐ Overflowing sludge
- ☐ White scum or foam on the water
- ☐ Slow-draining toilets or sinks in the property
- ☐ None seen

Photos of the drainage field or outlet (photos: attach, or note the file names)

Problems found at the tank (worked out automatically in the app)

Signs at the drainage field or outlet (worked out automatically in the app)

Desludged in the last year (if applicable; worked out automatically in the app)

If applicable: Problems are recorded above but the result is Working. Check the result, or note why the problems do not affect how the system works.

Result * (choose one)

- ☐ Working ☐ Needs maintenance ☐ Failing: repair or replace

If applicable: The general binding rules require the system to be repaired or replaced when it is not in good working order, for example with leaks, cracks in tank walls or pipes, blocked pipes, poor drainage, sewage smells, or a failed motor, pump or electrical supply.

Are maintenance records and the manual kept, to pass on if the property is sold?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Actions and sign-off

Are further actions needed?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Further actions (copy this block for each one; if applicable)

What needs doing? *

Priority (choose one)

- ☐ Urgent ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

Who will do it?

Due date

Status (choose one)

☐ Open ☐ In progress ☐ Completed

Inspector name *

Position or company

Inspector signature

Signing records what was found on the day. It does not make unsafe equipment safe or replace a thorough examination, design check or service by a competent person.