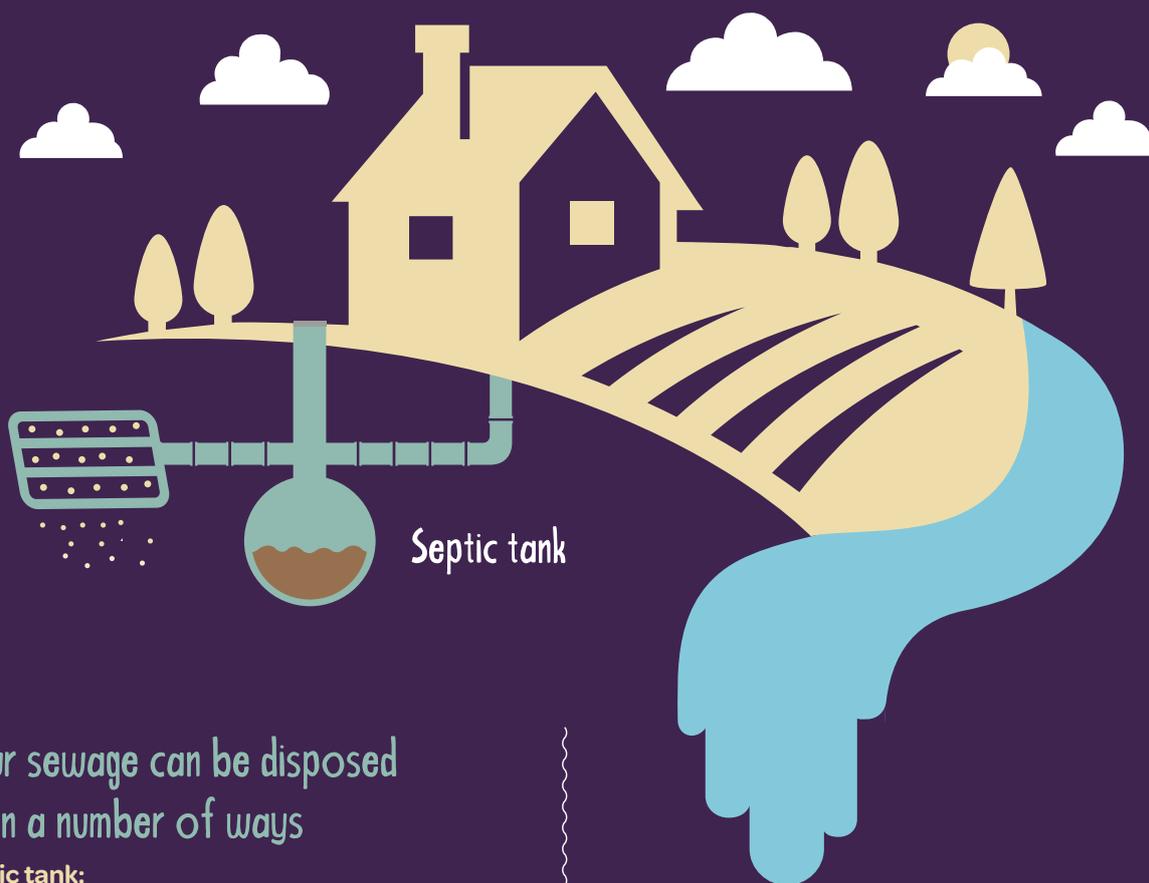


# DOMESTIC SEWAGE SYSTEMS: Important information

If your home is off the mains sewer network, it is your responsibility to ensure your sewage and waste water is not polluting the environment.



## Your sewage can be disposed of in a number of ways

### Septic tank:

an underground tank where the solids sink to the bottom and the liquid flows out and soaks through the ground.

### Small sewage treatment plant:

a part-mechanical system that treats the liquid so it's clean enough to go into a river or stream.

### Cesspool (also called a cesspit):

a sealed tank that collects the sewage and has to be tankered away from your home.

If any of these systems are not maintained correctly they will be polluting your local environment.

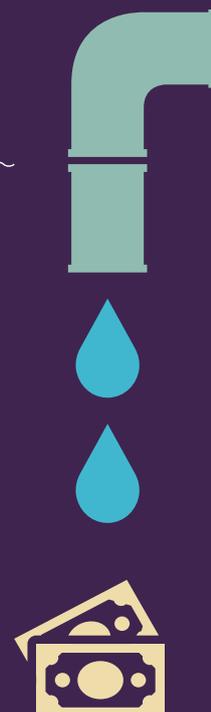
## How does this affect you?

Maintaining your sewage system properly will save you money in the long run.

Undertaking regular maintenance and repair work will cost a few hundred pounds each year, whereas replacing a damaged system will cost thousands of pounds.

If you do not fix a faulty sewage system, you're directly affecting your local environment and could face a fine of up to...

# £50,000



## The legal bit

If you have a septic tank or small sewage treatment plant, by law you must comply with the Environment Agency's 'general binding rules' or the conditions set out in your permit, by ensuring your system is maintained properly and does not cause pollution.



### It's pretty simple, here are the main points

- Have your system emptied at least once a year.
- Inspect it regularly.
- Get any faults or problems fixed immediately.
- Selling your house? You must inform the buyer in writing that the property has a septic tank or sewage treatment plant.

If you have a cesspool, you simply need to have it emptied when full and do not allow it to leak or overflow. If it's not fitted with a high level alarm, get one fitted so you know when to get it emptied, before it overflows.

To avoid unnecessary costs and fines and to make sure you're following all the rules go to [www.gov.uk/small-sewage-rules](http://www.gov.uk/small-sewage-rules)

## How to reduce your maintenance costs



### Regularly check for signs of pollution and call a specialist if you spot...

- Sewage smells or pools of water near the sewage system.
- Sludge, foam, loo paper, or grey fungus in your local stream.



### What not to put in your sewage system

- Rainwater **MUST NOT** enter your system, it will stop it from working properly.
- Do not flush nappies, 'flushable' wipes or sanitary products down the toilet as they can block your system - only flush away the 3Ps (pee, poo, and paper).
- Do not put any fat, oil or grease down the sink as they can block your drains and damage your system.
- Avoid using harsh cleaning products such as bleach, or use them sparingly, as they kill the bacteria that break-down the waste in your system (use eco- and tank-friendly cleaning products and laundry detergents).



### Water efficiency inside your home

- Fit a water-efficient showerhead.
- Reduce the amount of water you use to flush the toilet by using toilet blocks (e.g. 'Hippo the Water Saver') or retrofit a dual flush system.
- Choose quick cycle options on your washing machine and dishwasher.

