Ready to get checked?

Call a licensed inspector.
The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency maintains a list on its website at **www.pca.state.mn.us/nwqhb17**. You also can receive a list by calling the St. Louis County Environmental Services Department (ESD).

The inspector submits the inspection report to ESD for review.

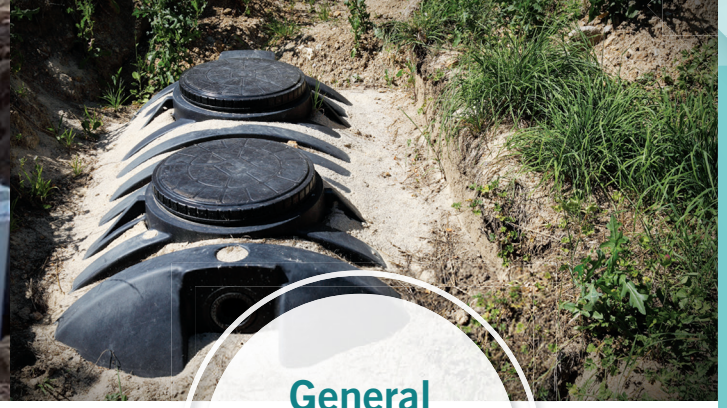
Depending on the findings,
ESD sends the property owner a Certificate of Compliance, or a notice stating the system is non-conforming, non-compliant or – in serious situations – an imminent threat to public health.

Compliant systems receive
a Certificate of Compliance valid for three years.

Non-conforming systems receive
a Certificate of Non-Conformity valid for three years and don't require a system upgrade unless bedrooms are added to the house or other changes are made that increase water usage.

Non-compliant systems receive either

- a Certificate of Non-Compliance and must be upgraded within one year (shoreland property) or two years (non-shoreland), or
- a Notice of Imminent Threat to Public Health and must be upgraded within 10 months.



General maintenance tips for septic systems

- Evaluate your tank every two to three years and have it pumped as needed.
- Use caution when cleaning your septic tank through the maintenance hole. Never clean through the inspection pipe.
- Insulate the cover and secure tightly.
- Install an effluent screen to prevent most solids from reaching the soil treatment area.
- Inspect the baffles, effluent screen, pumps and other components each time the tank is pumped.
- Avoid using additives.

For more information:

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department
(800) 450-9278 | esdinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov

Virginia
307 First Street South
Suite 115
Virginia, MN 55792
(218) 749-0625

Duluth
100 Missabe Building
227 W. 1st St., Suite 100
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 725-5200

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY MINNESOTA

WHAT TO KNOW

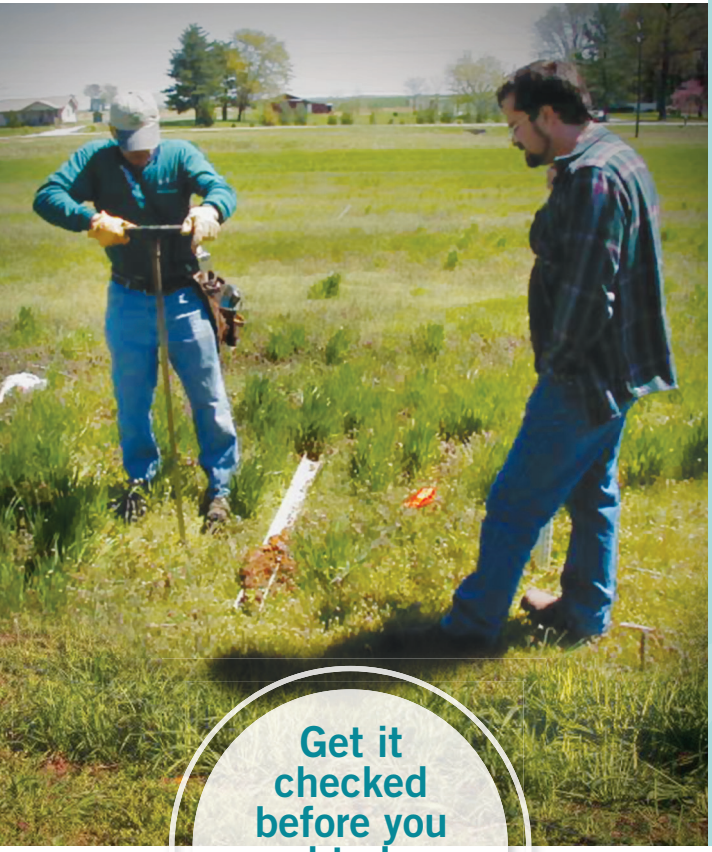
IF YOU'RE THINKING OF SELLING YOUR PROPERTY

Point of sale requirement information for septic owners

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

It's always a good idea to make sure your septic system is functioning properly.

It's important for the health of you and your family while you're living in your home; and to help the process go more smoothly when it's time to sell. A compliant system is a healthy system, and that's in the best interest of everyone. It also helps preserve the value of your home.



Get it checked before you need to know

Residents with a septic system must have it inspected prior to the sale, transfer, contract for deed or any other conveyance of property.

If you're thinking of selling your home and need to have your system inspected, get it checked early. A licensed inspector will measure to ensure your system has the required distance of vertical separation beneath it to safely protect the groundwater. Various criteria regarding soil types and other details are checked, but the vertical separation is the biggest factor.

Exceptions:

- Systems built and approved within the last 10 years do not require an inspection.
- Systems more than 10 years old that have been inspected within the last three years and given either a Certificate of Compliance or a Certificate of Non-Conformity do not require an inspection.
- Non-shoreland property transactions between family members are exempt until 2019.

St. Louis County's new ordinance provides flexibility by:

- allowing residents to use holding tanks if they decide that is the best option,
- maintaining more liberal system upgrade criteria and timelines, and
- allowing continued use of some older system types in non-shoreland areas.

Most systems are in compliance. However, if your existing system is inspected and found to be non-compliant or an imminent threat to public health, it should be replaced prior to property transfer. If that doesn't happen, an escrow account is required. Acting early gives you time to make necessary corrections before the sale or transfer.

What are the rules?

What to know about escrow

The time of property transfer (point of sale) is the right time to verify a system's status.

It's also the most reasonable time to establish there is funding to fix a system that is failing.

The county requires 100% of estimated repair costs be set aside in an escrow account when a system fails a point of sale inspection and the system upgrade will occur after the property transaction, or for homes sold when conditions do not allow for system inspections (for instance during some winter months) the county requires money be set aside in escrow.

Financial assistance options

The county offers two forms of financial assistance for septic owners.

Low-interest loans are administered by the **Northspan Group**. Call **(800) 232-0707** for more information.

A grant program is available for systems deemed an imminent threat to public health. This program is subject to income guidelines and is administered by **AEOA**. Call **(218) 748-7311** to learn more.