



## 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/water/ssts-search](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/ssts-search). You also can receive a list by calling the St. Louis County On-site Wastewater Division (OSWD).

The inspector submits the inspection report to OSWD for the review.

### Depending on the findings,

OSWD will send the property owner a Certificate of Compliance Existing System, 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 Existing System valid for three years.

### Non-conforming systems receive

a Notice of Non-Conformity valid for three years, which does not 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 Notice 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.
- Have your septic tank cleaned by your Maintainer through the maintenance hole; never clean through the inspection pipe.
- Ensure covers are secured tightly.
- Clean your effluent screen at least once a year.
- Avoid using additives.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**St. Louis County**  
**Planning & Community Development**  
**On-site Wastewater Division (OSWD)**  
**(800) 450-9277 | [OSWinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:OSWinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov)**

**Virginia, MN**  
**(218) 749-0625**

**Duluth, MN**  
**(218) 725-5200**

[www.stlouiscountymn.gov/septic](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/septic)



# WHAT TO KNOW

## IF YOU'RE THINKING OF SELLING YOUR PROPERTY

**Point of sale requirement information for septic system owners**





## WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT SEPTIC COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS

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

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

## WHAT ARE THE RULES?

**A point of sale compliance inspection of the existing septic system is required whenever property in St. Louis County is sold or transferred.**

**If you're thinking of selling your home and need to have your system inspected, get it checked early as inspections cannot be completed during winter conditions.**

### A licensed inspector:

- Determines vertical separation of system bottom to saturated soil or bedrock.
- Evaluates absorption area for signs of surface seepage, or surface discharge.
- Inspects all tanks for signs of cracks, leaks, degradation.
- Inspects filters, baffles and risers of tanks.
- Measures required setbacks.

### Exceptions:

- Systems built and issued a Certificate of Compliance Authorization to Use 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 Existing System or a Notice of Non-Conformity do not require an inspection.
- A full list of exemptions can be found in the St. Louis County SSTS Ordinance #61 at [stlouiscountymn.gov/septic](http://stlouiscountymn.gov/septic)

**Note: Most systems are in compliance. However, if your existing system is inspected and found to be noncompliant 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 TO KNOW ABOUT ESCROW

**It's important to determine the status of your septic system early in the selling process.**

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

The county requires 100% of the estimated replacement costs be set aside in an escrow account when a system fails a compliance 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 most winter months).

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

The county offers different forms of financial assistance for septic owners. Contact the St. Louis County Planning & Community Development in Duluth at 218-725-5200 or Virginia at 218-749-0625 for more information. Or email [oswinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:oswinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov).