

TEST YOUR WELL

During the summer of 2011, the Linn Sanitary District and the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency cooperated in a joint venture to encourage residents of the Geneva Lake area to have their private drinking wells tested. Fifty-nine wells were tested for coliform bacteria, nitrate, arsenic and chloride. The majority of them tested good. Those that had some problems were given options on how to correct the problem.

It is up to the home owner to assure their drinking water is potable and of good quality. The Linn Sanitary District strongly encourages home owners to test their wells annually, usually in the spring. If your water has been turned off or has not been used for several weeks, it is good to test your water when you turn it back on and before you drink it. The most common parameter tested for is coliform bacteria. If you have some taste, color or odor problems consider testing for additional parameters.

Use only a clean sterilized bottle provided by the lab. Sample as close to the well as possible, preferable from a sampling faucet located next to or near the pressure tank. . Make sure the sample has not gone through a softener, iron curtain, filter or other water treatment process. Carefully flame the faucet where the sample will be collected. Let the water run for a few minutes to make sure that fresh water from the ground is being sampled and not water that has been sitting in the pressure tank or lines. Carefully fill the bottle and cap it immediately. Complete the form as much as possible and

include it in the shipment. Samples should be sent to the lab immediately so the sample arrives within 24 - 48 hrs. If you can't send the sample right away, keep it refrigerated until you can. Results should come back within 5-7 days.

For more information on well testing visit the following web pages or give us a call at 262-245-4532.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wells/privateWellTest.html>

Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene:
<http://www.slh.wisc.edu/ehd/watermicro/>

A REMINDER

The Linn Sanitary District is working with the Walworth County Sanitation Division to get all POWIS within the District up to a functioning status. There are several systems identified by our inspection program as having some serious problems that still haven't been brought up to code. We are grateful to the many district residents who took the time and effort to improve or repair their systems. On behalf of the lake and all those who drink the groundwater, we thank you. For those who have not done anything to upgrade their failing systems, you will be hearing from us and the Walworth County Sanitation Division soon.

If you have question on your private on site wastewater system or well feel free to contact the Linn Sanitary District at 262-245-4532.



LINN SANITARY DISTRICT

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<http://www.townoflinn.com/Sanitary.htm>

SUMMER 2012 Newsletter

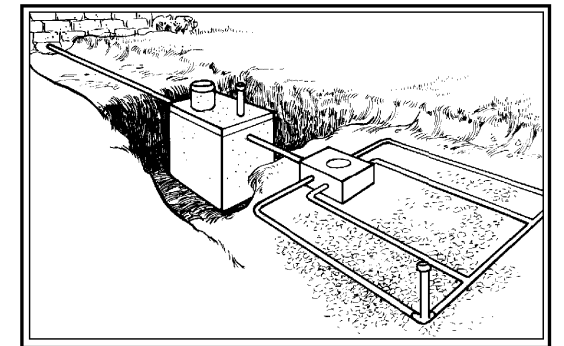
*-FOR OUR HEALTH-
-AND GENEVA LAKE'S
PROTECTION-*

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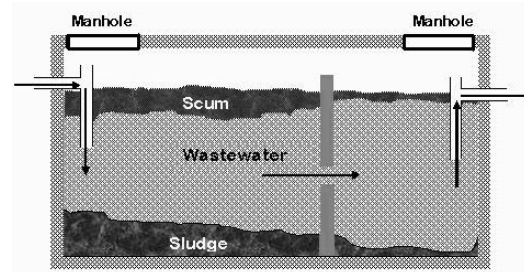
2012 -An Interesting Summer

With the hot dry summer many septic systems are showing themselves in an indirect manner. The grass in many yards has gone dormant and turned brown. Yet above the soil absorption component of your septic system the lawn may be green. In some cases you can see the distinct pattern identifying where the laterals run. These types of situation are more pronounced and likely to be identified on mounds. At one time mounds were required to be capped with a clay layer to prevent rain water from infiltrating and percolating into the field. However, recent thought is to not cap the top of the mounds as evaporation and uptake of wastewater by the plants is a proven method of getting rid of the water. Thus the plants growing on top of the mound have a supply of nutrient rich water even during dry times.

POWTS Maintenance - Knowing Your System

Although a private on-site wastewater treatment system (POWTS) may not have many moving parts it still requires periodic maintenance. In most cases maintenance is checking over the

components and condition of the tank and pumping the tank when the solids level gets to be about 1/3 of the tank capacity.



The accumulation of solids can vary depending upon the type and frequency of use. A house that is only used by a couple on weekends or only during the summer will not accumulate solids as fast as a house used year round by a family of five. On the average it is good to pump the tank once every three years. Although you may not have a full load of solids it is worth the effort to have your system and its components checked over every three years.

Soil Absorption Systems

The soil absorption system (SAS) is the final step in the treatment and disposal of wastewater from a private on-site wastewater treatment system (POWTS). SASs are designed to load the wastewater into the soil. As the water moves through the soil the dissolved pollutants are

chemically bound to the soil or biologically assimilated by the critters in soil.

SASs come in different sizes and shapes. The most important factors in determining the type of SAS are the soil type and lot area. SASs work by allowing the water to move through the soil at a rate which allows for treatment. Sandy soils allow good movement but often the waste water moves too fast for treatment. Clay and fine silts have good treatment but because the soil is so fine, movement of water is limited. The good soil must be deep enough for the bottom of the SAS to be at least three feet above any limiting factor in the soil.

Limiting factors can be the water table, bedrock, layers of clay in the soil, or significant changes in the soil. On sites where mounds are used, there is not enough good native soil on site for the three foot separation so soil is brought in and mounded to give the three foot separation.

SASs can be trenches, beds, seepage pits, mounds or at-grades. At-grades are similar to mounds except the field sits on the surface and is then covered with soil. The more site limitations the more sophisticated your SAS will need to be. Field size is determined by the soil type and the number of bedrooms in the house.

All SASs should have a vent pipe. The pipe allows for air movement through the system but it can also be used as a diagnostic tool if problems with the SAS arise. The vent pipe is set to the depth of the bed. If there is standing water in the vent pipe, it's an indication that your SAS may be saturated.

Types of Soil Absorption Systems

