



*“Depend on Us to Protect Gwinnett’s Health”*

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## **LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

### **What is Gwinnett County Environmental Health’s Land Use program?**

- A state-mandated program which oversees and enforces Georgia’s On-Site Sewage Management System (i.e. “septic system”) rules and regulations which have been adopted by Gwinnett county and municipalities contained within the county.

### **General information about septic systems in Gwinnett and in your municipalities:**

- Over 100,000 documented systems since 1975
- Many non-residential developments are also served by septic systems
- Components:
  - a septic tank which catches the solid wastes
  - an absorption field which cleans the liquid wastes (effluent) and returns clean water to natural, underground water tables
  - both the septic tank and absorption field are buried on the property and may not be noticed by the property owners or occupants

### **Issues a failing septic system can create in your municipality:**

- Nuisance/Quality of life
- Potential impact on property values/condemnation of property
- Pollution of storm drains, waterways, and wells
- Potential health risk to both humans and animals (domestic and wildlife)

### **Common issues which can contribute to a septic system’s failure:**

- Construction of additions (i.e. decks, storage buildings, swimming pools, bedrooms, etc.)
- Water usage which exceeds a system’s design
- Installation of permanent landscape features (i.e. retaining walls, French drains, swales, etc.)
- Grading and paving
- Age and biomat formation

### **What can your municipalities do to help prevent septic system failures and misuse?**

- Require building permit applicants for both new construction and existing properties whose properties are served by septic systems to have their plans reviewed by Environmental Health.
- Require zoning change applicants (i.e. converting residential structure into a day care) whose properties are served by septic systems to have their proposed changes reviewed by Env. Health
- Require property owners making changes to the site (i.e. adding a pool, digging a well, adding a bedroom addition) that is served by a septic tank to have their proposed changes reviewed by Environmental Health prior to municipalities issuing a building permit
- If a failure is suspected, report it to Environmental Health for investigation.

### **Contact information Gwinnett County Environmental Health**

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