

## WORKING TOWARDS SAFE & RESPONSIBLE ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SERIES

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MAINTAINING YOUR ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

### WHY SHOULD YOU MAINTAIN YOUR ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

This fact sheet provides information about the many benefits of properly maintaining an OSMS. The key reasons include saving you money, protecting your property value, keeping you and your neighbours healthy and protecting the environment.

Properties and households with OSMS are required under the Local Government Act 1993 to maintain a properly functioning system. There are also other reasons as to why it is important to maintain your OSMS.

#### SAVES YOU MONEY

Regular maintenance will cost less than repairing or replacing a malfunctioning system. If excess sludge builds up in the primary septic tank, it may carry over into the absorption trench and result in unhealthy surcharges.

#### KEEPS YOU & YOUR NEIGHBOURS HEALTHY

Household wastewater is loaded with disease causing bacteria and viruses as well as high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. An OSMS that is working well will remove most of these pollutants. If an OSMS is insufficiently treating wastewater it can cause groundwater contamination, which can spread disease in humans and animals. There is also the risk of surface water contamination, which can significantly increase the chance of any swimmers contracting a variety of infectious diseases, from eye and ear infections to acute gastrointestinal illness to hepatitis.

#### PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT

A large amount of effluent is dispersed below the ground's surface every day. Groundwater contaminated by poorly or untreated wastewater or effluent doesn't just pose a risk to drinking water – it poses dangers to the environment. A failing OSMS releases bacteria, viruses and chemicals that are toxic to local waterways. When these pollutants are released into the ground they will eventually reach rivers and lakes where they can potentially harm local ecosystems by possibly killing native plants, fish and more.

#### PROTECTS YOUR PROPERTY VALUE

An unusable OSMS or one that is in poor condition will more than likely lower the value of your property and also increase the chance of a potentially costly legal liability.

