

FAST FACTS

Approximately
1,200 Southfield properties remain on septic systems



Septic systems must be inspected every

3
YEARS

\$5,000
reduced connection fee to tap-in to city sewer



The average septic to sewer loan in Southfield is

\$9,448.57*



with an annual payment of
\$791.47*

*In addition to tap in fee and other factors outlined in this brochure.

The City offers homeowners a loan program with
3% interest



with an **18-year** amortization for sanitary sewer hook-up

ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL IMPACT OF A FAILED SEPTIC SYSTEM

A properly maintained and functioning septic system is imperative to the health, safety and welfare of not only your family, but the entire community. When septic systems are properly inspected and maintained on a routine basis, they can serve as a safe waste management alternative. However, when not properly inspected or maintained, they can cause contamination of surface and groundwater resources, which leads to public health and pollution problems.

A septic system failure causes untreated sewage to be released and transported to where it shouldn't be. This may cause sewage to come to the surface of the ground around the tank or the drainfield or to back up in pipes in the home.

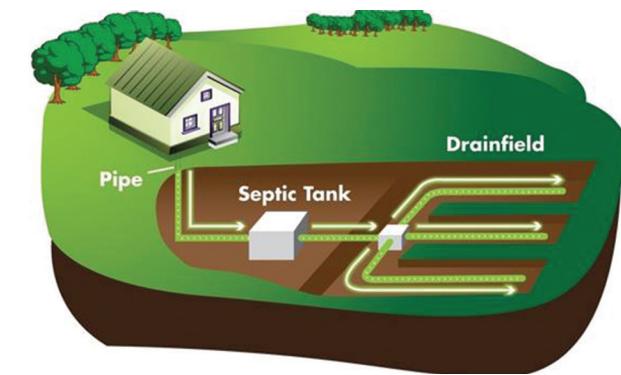
The disadvantages of septic tanks stem from the fact that maintenance and repairs are solely the responsibility of homeowners. Also, the capacity of septic systems is more limited than that of city sewage lines as they need ongoing maintenance at the homeowner's expense.

Septic tanks must be regularly pumped to prevent backups and overflow. Additionally, a septic system that is not properly inspected and maintained can also adversely affect the home's value and the homeowner's ability to sell the property.

For more information, contact Code Enforcement at (248) 796-4140.

CITY OF SOUTHFIELD

Septic and Sewage System 101



Code Enforcement

(248) 796-4140

www.cityofsouthfield.com

Southfield
the center of it all™

BACKGROUND

1999

The City of Southfield bonded for \$38.3 million to install sanitary sewers in parts of the city where none previously existed. To help repay the bond, residents and businesses are charged a fee to tap into the city sewer system. Gradually, property owners tied in to city sewers; however, roughly 1,600 properties still remain on septic.

2016

The City stepped up efforts to have more property owners connect to city sewers. Property owners with properly functioning septic systems are allowed to remain on septic. Property owners with failing systems were initially informed that they had to connect to the city sewer. For the safety of residents and visitors, the Southfield Building Department declared dwellings uninhabitable if the septic system was not working and raw sewage was spilling out on the property.

2017

Southfield City Council amended Ordinance 1571 to allow residents with a failing septic system the option of rebuilding their septic system rather than requiring that they connect to the city sewer. Council also reduced the sewer tap-in fee from \$7,706 to \$5,000.

WHAT IS ORDINANCE 1571?

- Property owners with septic systems must have their systems inspected every three years by a Certified Inspector.
- If a septic system fails inspection, owners have the option to connect to the city sewer **OR** repair their septic system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I get my septic system inspected?

A list of certified inspectors is available from Code Enforcement. Contact the inspector of your choice and schedule an on-site sewage evaluation. On-site sewage evaluation forms are available from Code Enforcement and must be filled out by the contractor during the system evaluation or may be downloaded at www.cityofsouthfield.com.

My septic system did not pass inspection. What should I do?

If your septic system fails inspection, you have two options:

- 1) Connect to city sewer. The cost of connecting to the sanitary sewer varies depending on the distance from the house or building to the sewer line and the topography of the property.
- 2) Repair your broken septic system per local and state guidelines.

How much will it cost to connect to the city sewer system?

The cost of connecting to the sanitary sewer system is made up of two sums: the connection fee paid to the City of Southfield covering the cost of the sewer system and the installation fee charged by the contractor. The connection fee is \$5,000. Installation fees vary by property depending upon the distance from the house or building to the sewer line and the topography of the terrain.

Is there financial assistance available to connect to the city sewer?

Yes! The City provides two options:

Low-interest loan for all Southfield residents, which allows for an interest only payment of 3% for the first three years with the remaining balance to be financed at 3% amortized over 15 years for a total of 18 years. The average septic to sewer loan in Southfield is \$9,448.57 with an annual payment of \$791.47 (again dependent upon other factors). Contact Code Enforcement at (248) 796-4140 for more information.

Zero interest loan for income eligible residents through the Southfield Home Improvement Program Well and Septic Program (SHIP-WAS Program). The SHIP-WAS Program will cover the cost of tap fees, installation of sanitary and water lines, elimination of septic tanks and minimal/limited restoration of areas disturbed by construction. Contact the Southfield Home Improvement Program at (248) 796-4174 for more information.

SEPTIC VS. SEWER

Septic systems are underground wastewater treatment structures containing a septic tank and a drainfield. Inside the tank, bacteria from the wastewater breaks down solid waste and liquids flow to the drainfield.

Sewer systems are a series of underground pipes that haul waste. The waste water is sent to a water treatment facility before returning to the environment.