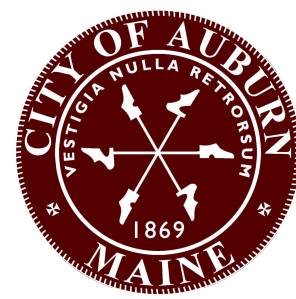

Lake Auburn Watershed Septic System Inspection Program

Presented by Lake Auburn
Watershed Protection Commission
and Auburn Permitting & Planning



Please be sure to sign in!
The sheet is on the table.



Introductions

Phoebe Hopkins

Watershed Outreach Coordinator

Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission

phopkins@awsd.org

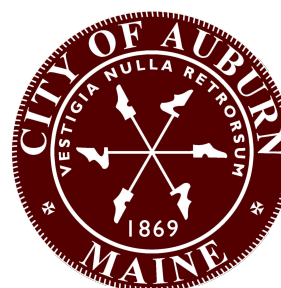


David Hediger

Director of Planning

City of Auburn

dhediger@auburnmaine.gov



Overview

1

Lake
Auburn

2

Septic
Systems &
Ordinance

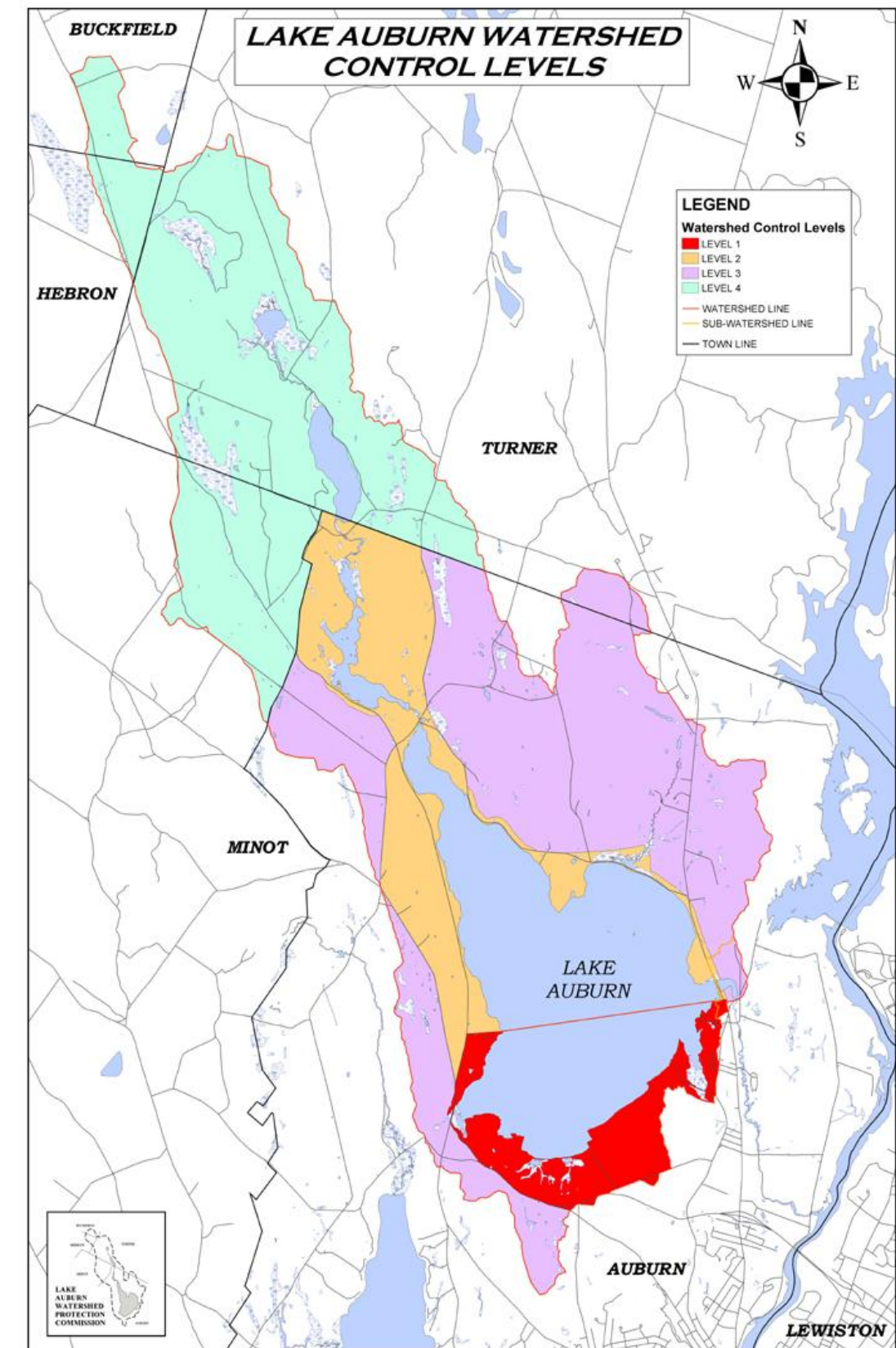
3

Assistance
Program



Watershed

- Encompasses land in five different towns
 - Auburn, Turner, Minot, Hebron, Buckfield
- Lake Auburn recharge is fairly evenly split from three different sources:
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ surface precipitation
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ surface flow
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ springs & groundwater



Drinking Water Source

- Primary drinking water source for Auburn and Lewiston since 1875
- Over 2.3 billion gallons delivered to over 41,000 customers in 2024
- Safe yield is sixteen million gallons per day



Water Quality

- Filtration waiver granted to AWSD and LWD in 1991 by Environmental Protection Agency
- Only 9 water utilities in Maine have earned this waiver
- 24/7 water quality monitoring at intake; frequent testing of lake and tributary waters



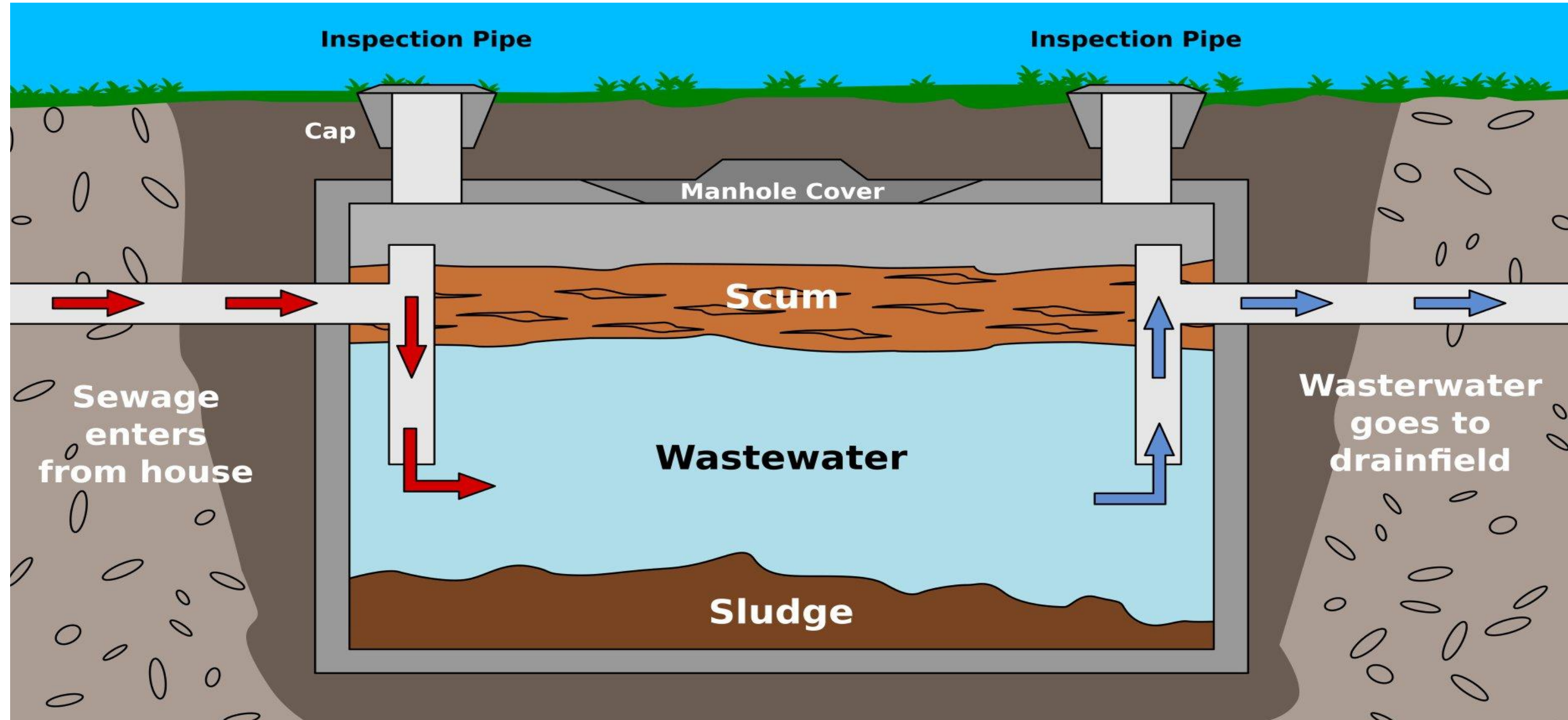
Commission

- Created in 1993 to maintain the quality of Lake Auburn’s water through education, outreach & watershed management efforts
- Since inception, has protected 2,469 acres of watershed land

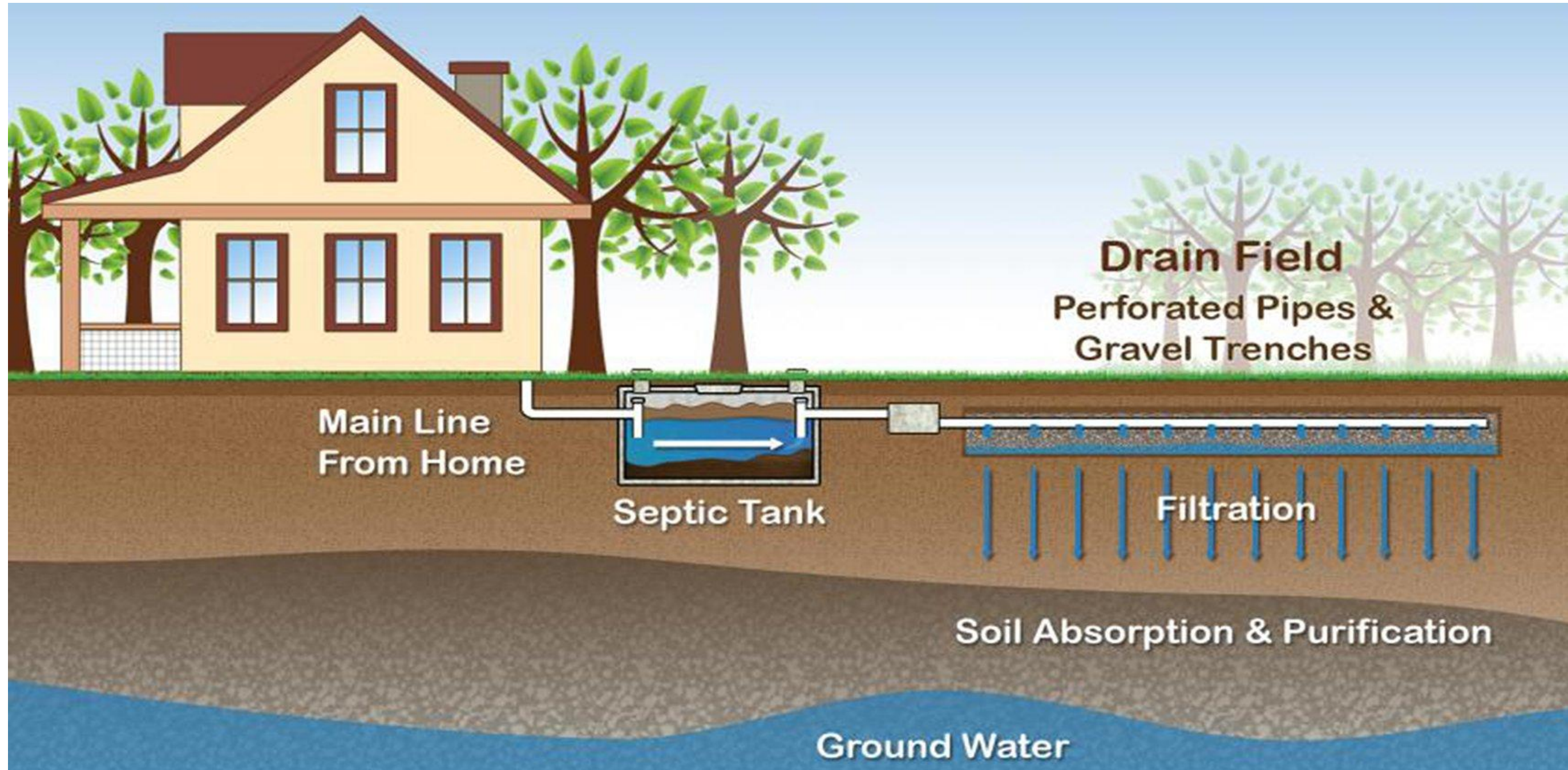
City of Auburn Representative	City of Auburn Representative
City of Lewiston Director of Public Works	Auburn Water District Representative
City of Lewiston Representative	Lewiston City Councilor
Minot, Hebron, Buckfield Representative	Town of Turner Representative

AVCOG Executive Director

Typical Septic System

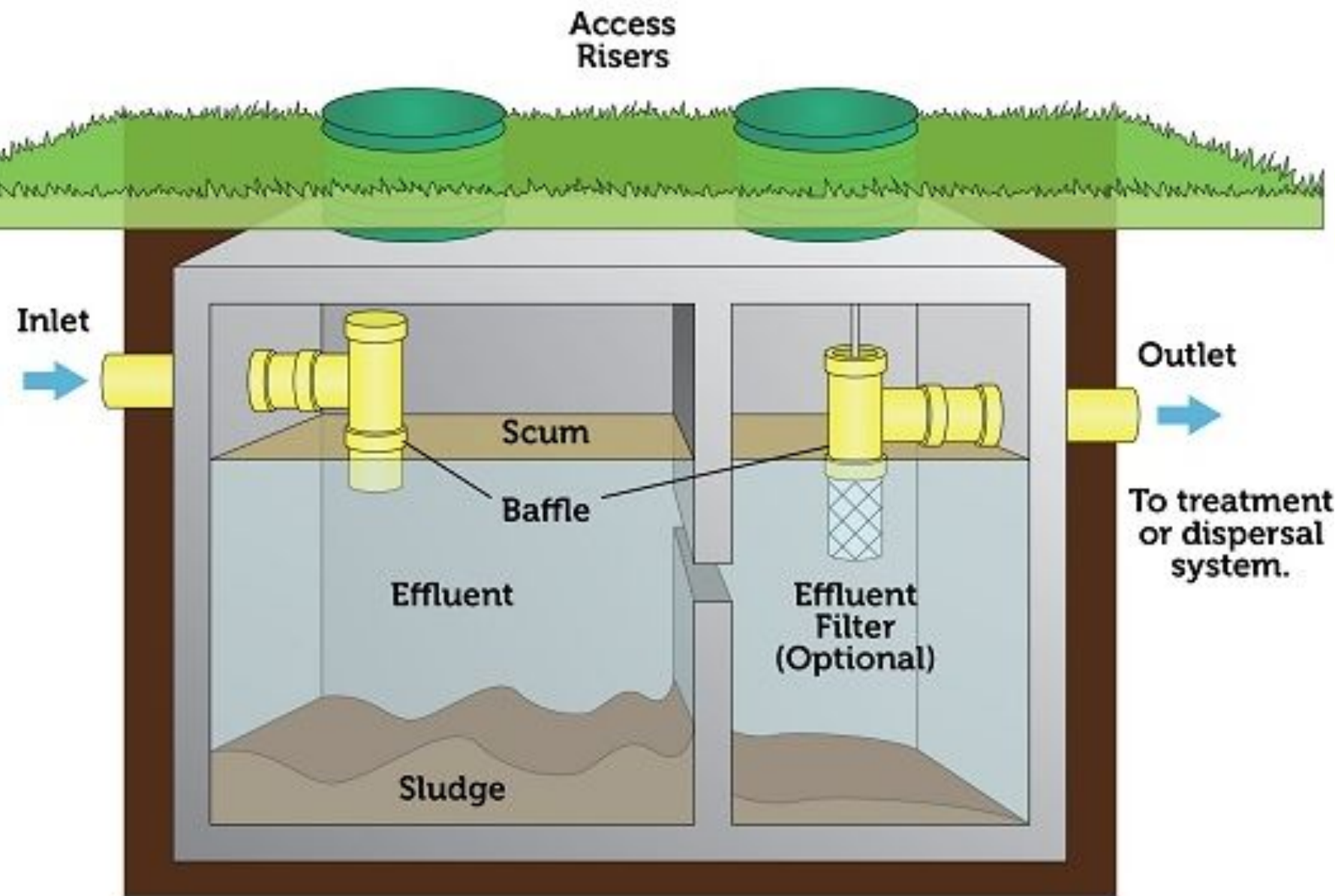


Typical Septic System



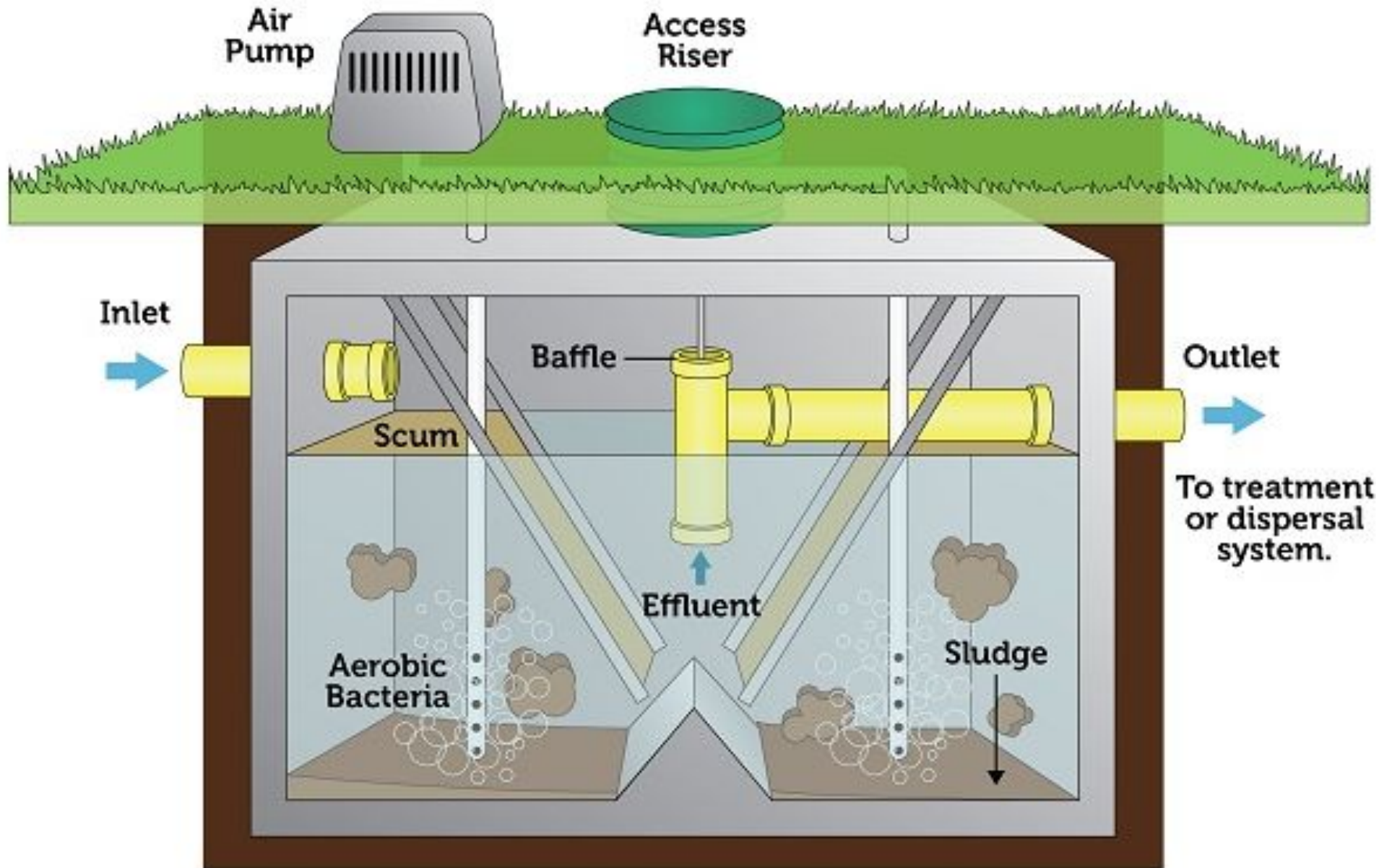
Section 2: SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Septic Tank



Please note: The number of compartments in a septic tank vary by state and region.

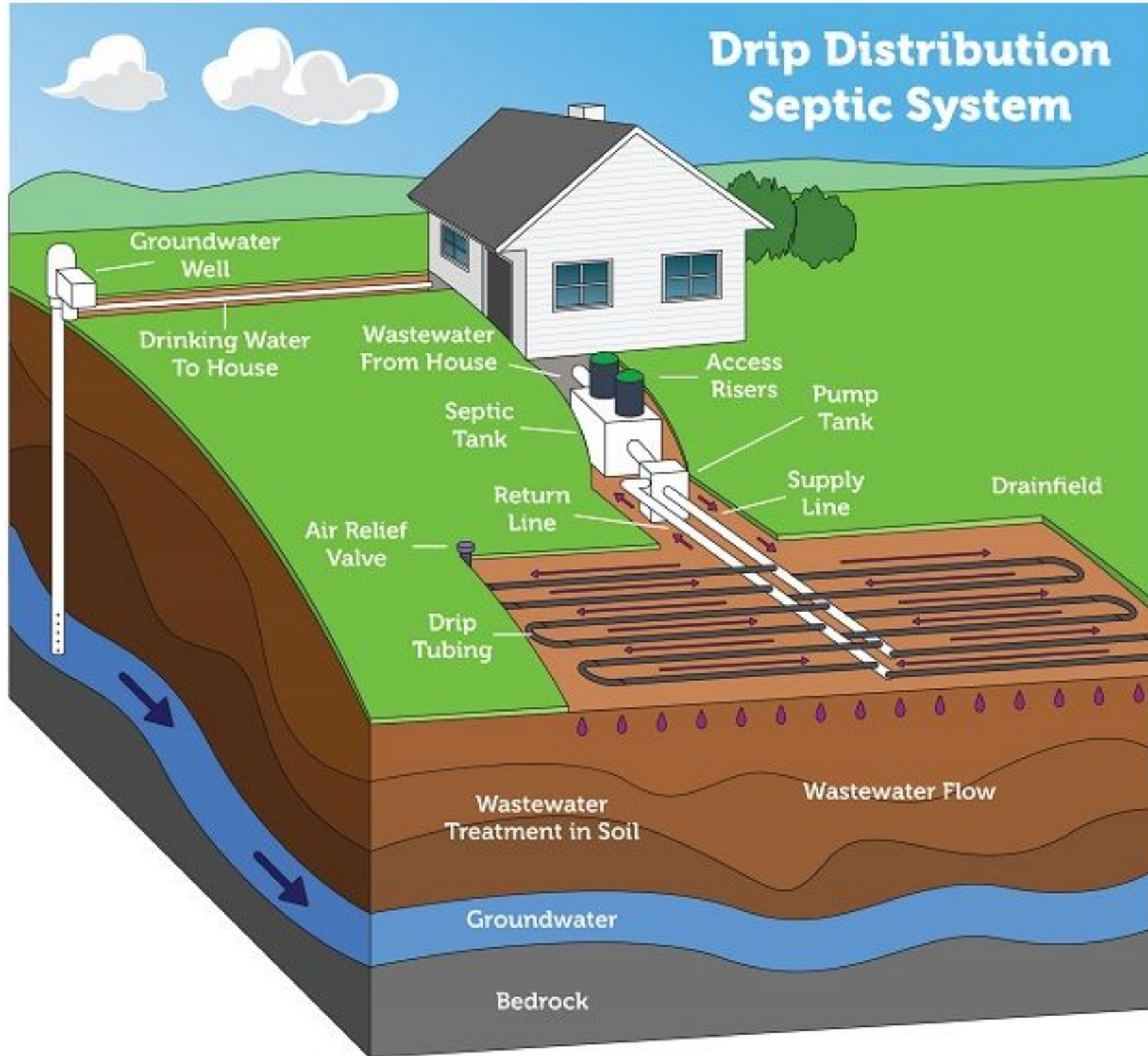
Aerobic Treatment Unit



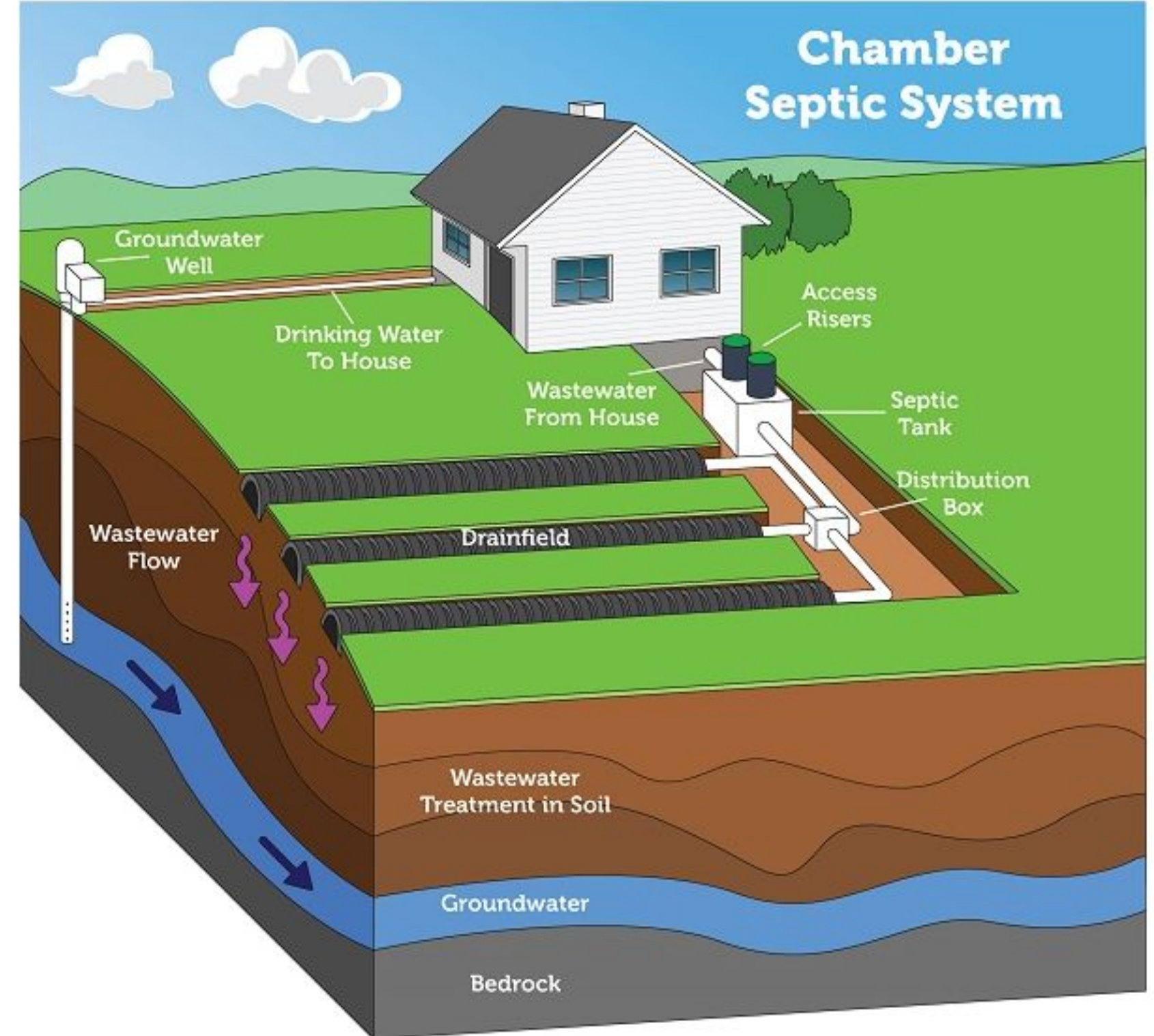
Please note: The Aerobic Treatment Unit can vary in components and design



Section 2: SEPTIC SYSTEMS



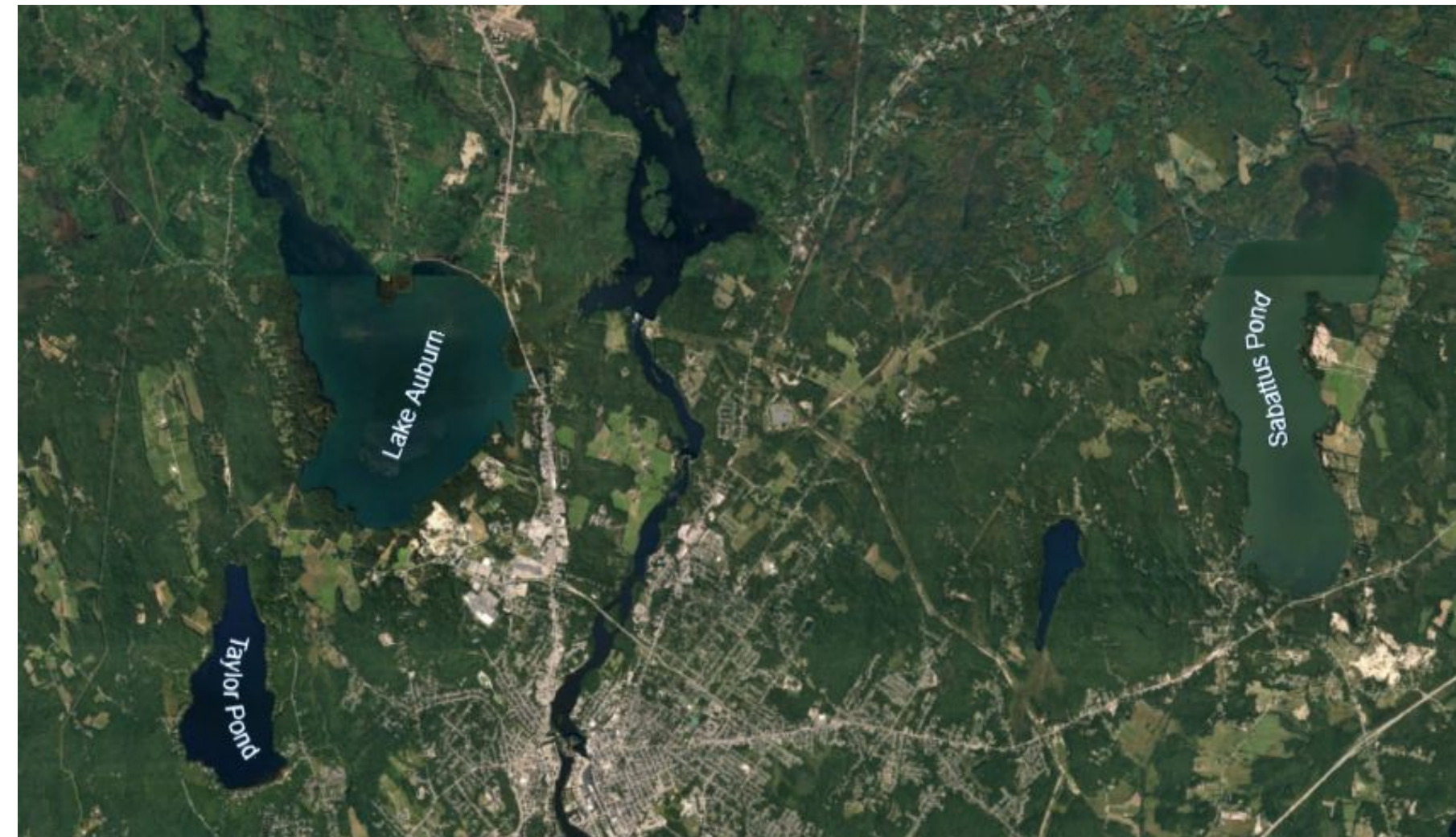
Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.



Please note: The ends of the chamber system lines are open for illustrative purposes only. In reality, and when properly installed, these lines are closed at the end. Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.

Why Does it Matter?

- If working improperly, untreated sewage begins to enter the environment
- Could result in contamination of the drinking water source
 - Pathogens
 - *Giardia lamblia*,
Cryptosporidium
 - Excess nitrogen & phosphorus
 - Algal blooms, fish kills



Septic System Maintenance

Pumping

- *Purpose:* cleans accumulated sludge & scum out of tank

Inspection

- *Purpose:* checks entire system - tank, pipes, drain field, mechanical components
- Finds leaks, clogs, build-ups before they become problems



Septic System Maintenance

Pumping

- *Frequency:* depends on usage, but 3-5 years is advisable
- If larger household, may need more frequent pumping

Inspection

- *Frequency:* 3-5 years
- Alternative systems with electrical float switches, pumps, or mechanical components may need more frequent inspections



Septic System Maintenance

- Signs of malfunction might take time to become noticeable
 - Spongy grass
 - Odor in house
 - Septic backup into home
- Waiting until noticeable = waiting until it becomes expensive to fix




Septic System Ordinance

- In 2024, City of Auburn made changes to the subsurface wastewater inspection requirements
 - Updated ordinance: Chapter 60, Article XII, Division 4, Sec. 60-952 (a)(2)(e)
- Ordinance established a new subsurface wastewater inspection program to safeguard the drinking water source from potential contamination due to aging or malfunctioning septic systems



Septic System Ordinance

- All septic systems in Auburn must be inspected every five years by a licensed septic inspector
- When you schedule the appointment, ask that the inspector use the state form (HHE-240)



Paul R. LePage, Governor
Tel. (207) 287-5689

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner
Subsurface Wastewater Unit

Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
286 Water Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel. (207) 287-8016
Fax (207) 287-9058; TTY (800) 606-0215
Fax (207) 287-4172

Septic System Inspection Report

Client Information
Name: _____
Mailing Address, Town, State, ZIP Code: _____
Telephone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Property Owner Information
Same as Client Yes No
Name: _____
Mailing Address, Town, State, ZIP Code: _____
Telephone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

1. Inspector's Information
Company: _____
Inspector's Name: _____ Certification # _____
Mailing Address, Town, ZIP Code: _____
Telephone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

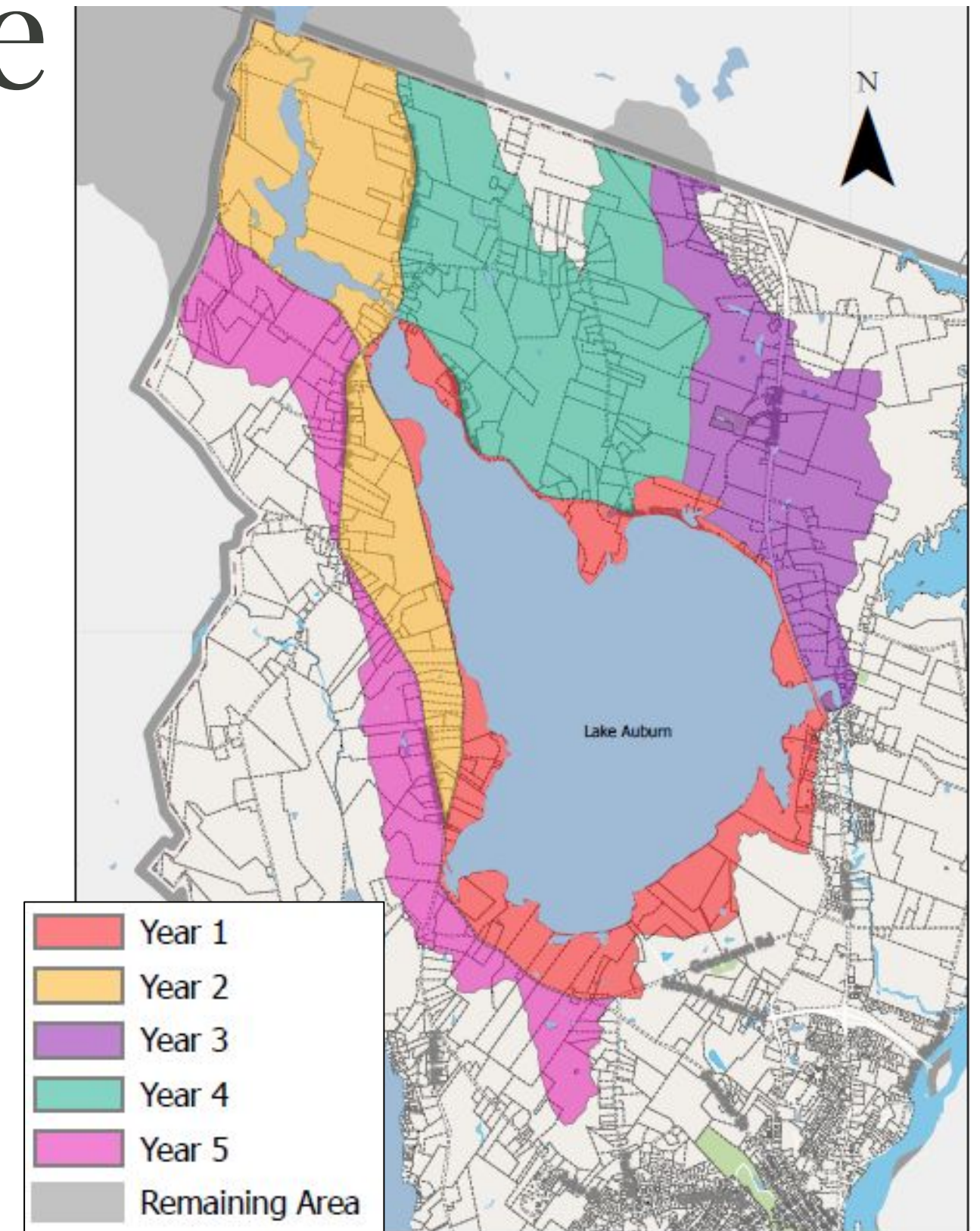
2. Property Information
Location (road, town) _____
Tax Map # _____ Lot # _____ Lot Size: _____ acres square feet
Zoning: Shoreland Zone Other: _____

Page 1 of 6
HHE-240
Rev. 02/2013



Septic System Ordinance

- Inspection schedule based on location within watershed overlay zone
- Year 1 and 2 inspections need to be submitted by July 1, 2026
- Inspection reports taking place within 2025 are acceptable
- If property is sold, a new inspection is required at time of sale



Septic System Ordinance

- Must provide documentation of inspection to City of Auburn
 - Bring to Planning, Permitting & Code Department, **or**
 - Email permits@auburnmaine.gov, **or**
 - Use SmartGov permitting system



Technical Assistance

- LAWPC can help you identify certified septic inspectors
 - Pre-qualified inspectors available
 - If you have another inspector in mind and are unsure if they are certified, we can help
- LAWPC staff are also available to be on site with you during the inspection, if desired

Participating Septic Inspectors:

Ryan Nickerson
Attentive Septic & Drain, LLC
PO Box 215, Turner, ME 04282
(207) 730-2550
attentivesepctic@gmail.com

Gail Guile
Septic Inspector
22 Pearl Street, Biddeford, ME 04005
(207) 730-1548
scheduling@septicinspector.net

James MacNaughton
AnnRuel Home Inspections
11 Church Street, Oakland, ME 04963
(207) 861-1227
jamesruelmac@gmail.com

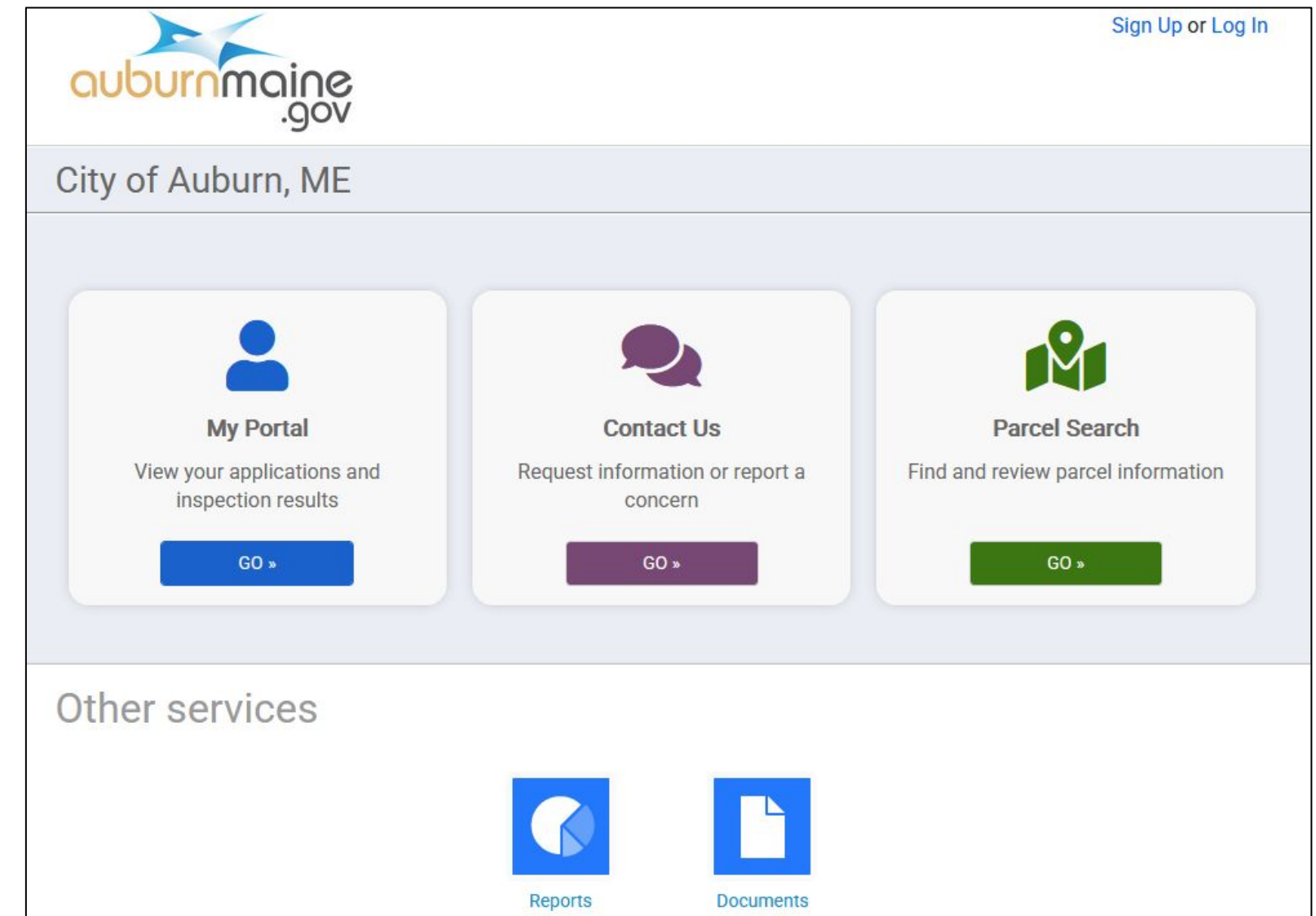
Larry Winslow
Winslow Co. Septic Solutions
14 Crystal Lane, Windham, ME 04062
(207) 329-8999
lrw62@icloud.com

Richard Browning
Upfront Home Inspection
PO Box 584, New Gloucester, ME 04260
(207) 536-9691
rick@upfronthi.com



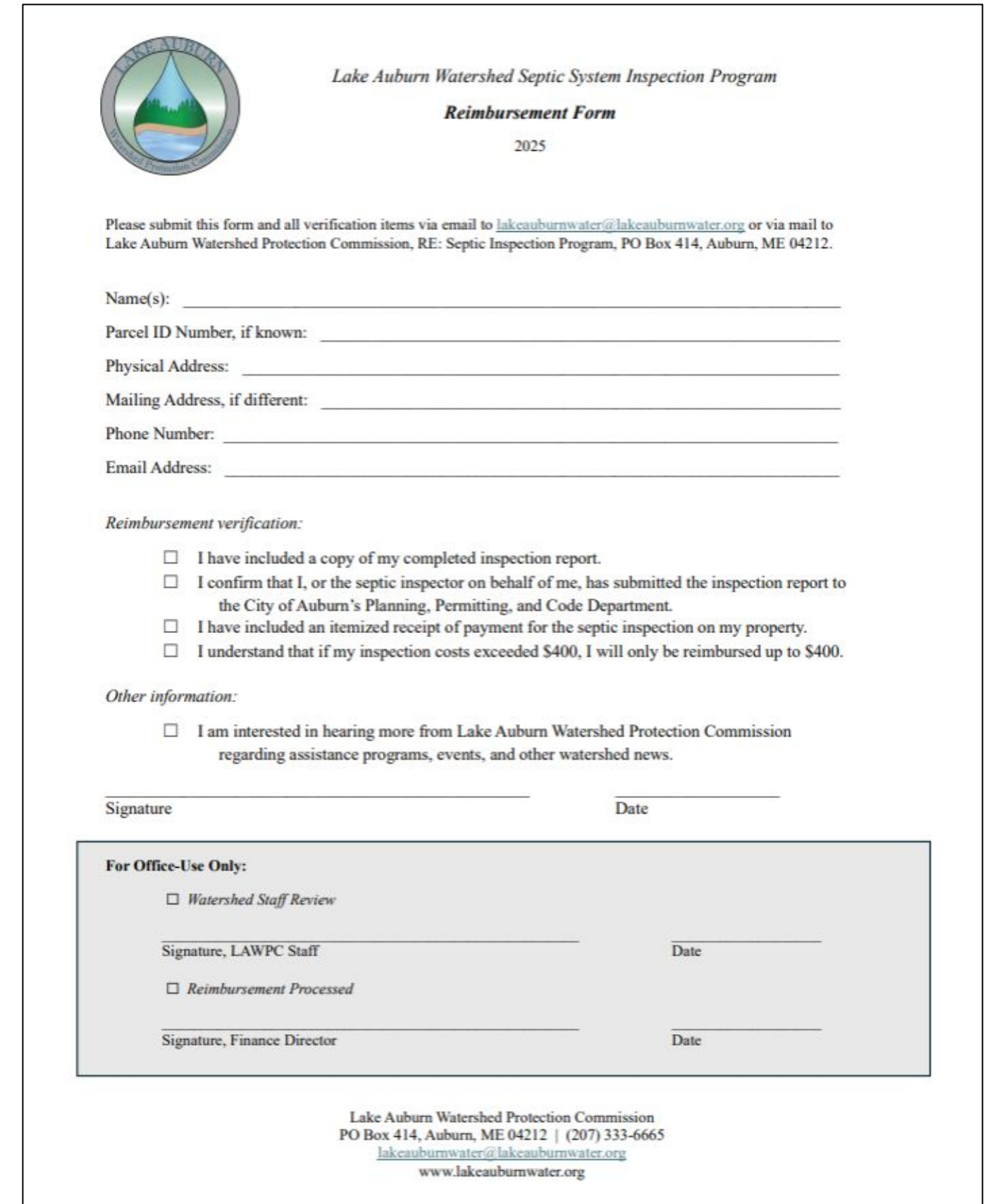
Technical Assistance


- LAWPC can help you ensure that you have provided the City of Auburn with all necessary documentation
- Connect you with City officials who can answer specific questions you have
- Help navigate SmartGov system



Financial Assistance

- LAWPC is reimbursing septic system owners up to \$400 for the cost of the inspection
- Submit to LAWPC:
 - Completed reimbursement form
 - Completed inspection report
 - Itemized receipt of payment for inspection



 *Lake Auburn Watershed Septic System Inspection Program*
Reimbursement Form
2025

Please submit this form and all verification items via email to lakeauburnwater@lakeauburnwater.org or via mail to Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission, RE: Septic Inspection Program, PO Box 414, Auburn, ME 04212.

Name(s): _____
Parcel ID Number, if known: _____
Physical Address: _____
Mailing Address, if different: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Reimbursement verification:

- I have included a copy of my completed inspection report.
- I confirm that I, or the septic inspector on behalf of me, has submitted the inspection report to the City of Auburn's Planning, Permitting, and Code Department.
- I have included an itemized receipt of payment for the septic inspection on my property.
- I understand that if my inspection costs exceeded \$400, I will only be reimbursed up to \$400.

Other information:

- I am interested in hearing more from Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission regarding assistance programs, events, and other watershed news.

Signature _____ Date _____

For Office-Use Only:

- Watershed Staff Review*
- Signature, LAWPC Staff _____ Date _____
- Reimbursement Processed*
- Signature, Finance Director _____ Date _____

Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission
PO Box 414, Auburn, ME 04212 | (207) 333-6665
lakeauburnwater@lakeauburnwater.org
www.lakeauburnwater.org



Additional Support

- Further septic repairs or replacement
 - State and national grants and low-interest loans are available to help fund septic repair or replacement
 - LAWPC can provide support in locating and applying to these programs



Additional Support

- Free stormwater site assessment
 - Evaluation of your property for stormwater runoff pathways and areas of erosion
 - Personalized solutions to slow down and filter runoff
 - Recommendations and resources to add native plants to your property



Resources



- https://www.auburnmaine.gov/departments/planning_permitting_code/floodplain_and_watershed.php

- Ordinance information, inspection schedule map, septic inspection submission

- <https://lakeauburnwater.org/>

- Program documents, reimbursement forms, contact info for participating septic inspectors

- <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/services/business-services/hydrology-and-wastewater/a-b-c-d-resources>

- Maine-specific FAQs about site evaluations, septic system permit search tool, financial resources, maintenance tips

- <https://www.epa.gov/septic/frequent-questions-septic-systems>

- General (but in-depth) FAQs about maintenance, inspections, regulations, compliance, failing systems, financial resources



Resources



Frequently Asked Questions

- ✓ Q: How do I find a copy of my septic system's design?
- ✓ Q: I bought my undeveloped lot many years ago, and it recently failed a site evaluation. Is my lot "grandfathered" for a septic system because of the length of time I have owned it?
- ✓ Q: If my undeveloped lot fails a site evaluation, is there some form of advanced treatment unit that I can install instead of a conventional system?
- ✓ Q: If my undeveloped waterfront lot fails a site evaluation, can I install fill soils to create a suitable site?
- ✓ Q: My existing septic system has failed. What should I do?
- ✓ Q: My existing septic system has failed. What happens if my lot does not pass a site evaluation?
- ✓ Q: I cannot afford the cost of installing a replacement system. Is there help available?

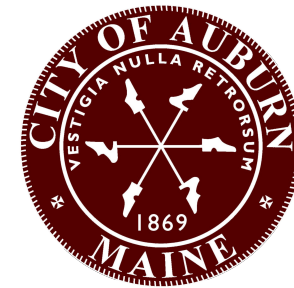


Questions?



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