

# 5 Winter Septic System Maintenance Tips

There is never a good time for a septic system problem especially during the cold winter months. Here are tips that can help you and your customers keep the septic system in top working order.



## Pump the septic tank.

If necessary the tank should be pumped prior to the winter season to eliminate accumulated solids.



## Inspect the system before the first snow and ice arrive.



Inspecting the tank prior to the cycle of freezing and thawing can detect any cracks or issues that should be corrected. Also, inspect the drainfield to ensure that there is no surfacing effluent, wet areas or spongy soil above the drainfield.



## Inspect the plant cover on new systems.

Systems installed in the fall may not have enough vegetative cover to properly insulate the system to prevent winter freezing. Placing a good layer of mulch or dry soil over the system is an important preventative measure.



## Winterize vacation home plumbing.

Septic systems require usage to minimize the risk of freezing. If the home is a vacation property that is not used regularly during the winter, the septic tank should be pumped prior to the first frost and the home's pipes should be winterized and drained.



## Avoid snow compaction and placing structures over the drainfield.

Although snow is a good insulator, compacted snow is not as effective. Homeowners should avoid driving over the drainfield, even in winter, and structures should never be placed on top of the system.



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