

# SEPTIC TANKS

## WHAT IS A SEPTIC TANK?

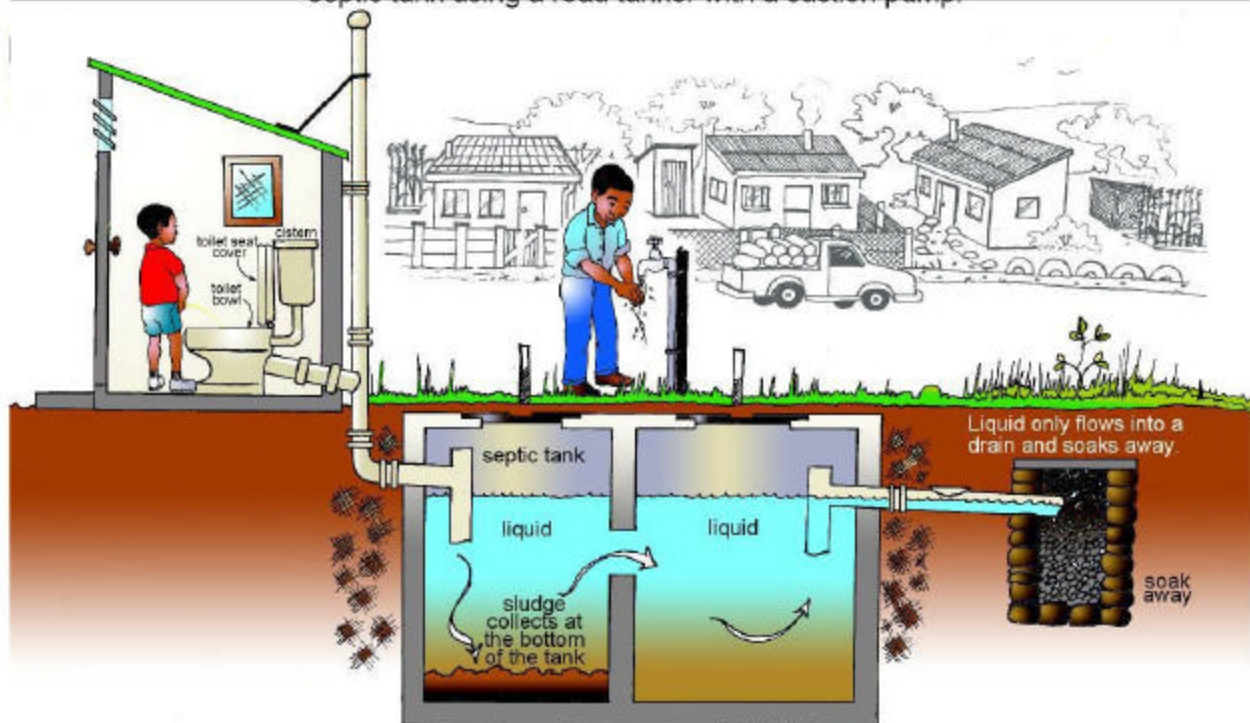
It is a tank under the ground which is connected to your toilet to collect all the urine and faeces which you flush down the toilet.

## WHERE IS A SEPTIC TANK USED?

It can be built by any home owner that has more than 200 liters of piped water per day, but does not have water borne sewerage services provided by the Municipality.

## HOW DOES A SEPTIC TANK WORK?

A toilet with a cistern connected to the water supply, allows the faecal matter and urine to be flushed into the septic tank. In the tank, the solids settle to the bottom and form a sludge, whilst the liquid flows into the ground through the soak-away. A soak-away is a trench below the ground filled with stones. Bacteria in the septic tank helps to break down the solids thereby increasing the life of the tank. However it is necessary when the tank fills up to empty the sludge out of the septic tank using a road tanker with a suction pump.



## HOW TO MAINTAIN A SEPTIC TANK

- ✗ Do not dispose of solid waste such as cigarette butts or sanitary towels etc into the septic tank as this will cause the tank to fill up very quickly and it will need to be emptied more frequently.
- ✗ Do not pour disinfectants (JIK, Jeyes Fluid, Dettol etc) into the septic tank as these will kill off the bacteria needed to breakdown the organic waste.

### NB

**Use a disinfectant to clean the toilet seat as this will kill harmful bacteria on the seat. Do not pour the disinfectant into the toilet bowl.**

**FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SEPTIC TANKS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM YOUR LOCAL ETHEKWINI WATER SERVICES AREA OFFICE.**

