

## What is a POWTTS?

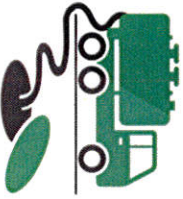
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A POWTTS is a private onsite wastewater treatment system, or more often referred to as a septic system. State law requires all waste discharged from a building to be treated by a POWTTS.

The primary components of a POWTTS are the septic tank and septic field. The characteristics of your soil determine the type and size of septic field necessary for property treatment.

Maintenance State law requires your septic tank to be inspected and, if necessary, pumped at least once every three years. Iowa County has a maintenance program where notices are sent to POWTTS owners every three years.

A holding tank, which is a septic tank that does not discharge into a field, must be inspected and, if necessary, pumped annually or as frequently as it is filled. A report is required to be submitted to Iowa County.



## Iowa County Planning & Development

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Iowa County Courthouse  
222 N. Iowa Street  
Dodgeville, WI 53533

Phone: 608-935-0333  
Fax: 608-935-0326

*In Iowa County...*

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**Private Septic  
Systems**

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## Not in My Septic System!



## System Care & Use

In addition to the mandatory county maintenance program, proper care and use of your system will keep it functioning correctly and extend its life

- Limit the amount of water entering your system. Use water-saving fixtures and appliances. Fix drips and leaks.
- Be aware of what you flush or put down the drain. Garbage disposals are discouraged, as are fats, greases, coffee grounds, sanitary napkins, diapers, etc. These items can clog the holes in the field pipes leading to backing up into your house.
- Divert surface water drainage away from the system.

- Do not flush toxic chemicals into the system, such as paint, oils, pesticides, etc. These not only will damage your system, but will likely end up in your drinking water.

- Minimize the use of strong chemical cleaners. Anti-bacterial cleaners will kill the bacteria that are necessary in your septic tank to break down solids. When possible, use natural cleaners such as vinegar or baking soda or commercial cleaners labeled as safe for septic systems.

- Avoid driving over mounds and at-grades with vehicles, tractors, etc. as compaction can cause premature failure. The same holds for grazing livestock on the field.

**Septic Tank Additives** While there is no accepted test method to prove septic tank additives work or don't work, some products are actually harmful.

In Wisconsin, all additives must be reviewed by the Dept. of Safety & Professional Services prior to sale for proof they will not harm the user, bacterial action in the system, soil absorption or groundwater quality.

If you choose to use an additive, be sure the product has been approved. Even then, it is at your own risk.

**Pretreatment Components** Some systems include a pretreatment component, such as an aerobic treatment unit (ATU), a sand filter, or a disinfection unit. These are designed to improve the quality of wastewater being discharged from the POWTS.

These components typically require frequent maintenance, often more than once a year. Owners should become familiar with their system's maintenance needs.

Never hesitate to contact the staff at the Office of Planning & Development with any questions...608-935-0398 or [ted.weier@iowacounty.org](mailto:ted.weier@iowacounty.org)

A list of pumpers and plumbers can be found at [www.iowacounty.org/departments/PlanningDevelopment/sanitation-info](http://www.iowacounty.org/departments/PlanningDevelopment/sanitation-info)

