



# St. Joseph County Department of Health

*“To promote health and wellness with compassion and integrity through partnerships, education, protection, and advocacy for all who reside in and visit St. Joseph County.”*

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## PROPERTY TRANSFER SEPTIC AND WELL INSPECTION REPORT

Address inspected: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of inspection: \_\_\_\_\_

### WHAT DOES THIS INSPECTION REPORT MEAN?

This inspection is required by County Code 52 prior to the sale of any property with an onsite septic system or water well. This inspection is based on visual observations of specific items that the Department of Health considers important to evaluate for the purchase of a property. However, this is not an all-inclusive inspection.

**Passing the inspection does not guarantee the systems will continue to function correctly in the future.**

There are many factors that can affect the operation of the system, such as the number of people using the system and how well it is/has been maintained. **If the buyer has concerns about the condition of the septic system, they may have a more thorough inspection performed.** All inspectors must be licensed by the Department of Health. The buyer must receive this report at least three days prior to closing.

### SEPTIC INSPECTION CONCLUSIONS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Public Health Threat aspects: The Department of Health **requires** action to be taken if any one of the Public Health Threat aspects fails. If an aspect fails, a permit for repair or replacement must be obtained by the Department of Health. If an aspect is unable to be observed, it shall be noted in the Cautionary Statements section below. The Department of Health may require further investigation to confirm the status of the stated aspect(s).

The septic system **passes** all Public Health Threat aspects. \_\_\_\_\_

The septic system **fails** at least one Public Health Threat aspect. \_\_\_\_\_

Cautionary aspects: In addition to the Public Health Threat aspects, the Department of Health requires an evaluation of the current septic system. These “buyer beware” aspects provide additional insight to the status of the septic system and may give clues to the potential lifespan and health of the system. If an aspect is unable to be observed, it shall be noted in the Cautionary Statements section below. **If an item from this section is marked as Failed, it does not necessarily mean the system is in failure.**

The septic system **passes** all cautionary aspects. \_\_\_\_\_

The septic system **fails** at least one cautionary aspect. \_\_\_\_\_

Cautionary statements/notes/etc.: If an aspect of the inspection could not be performed, state it here. Further evaluation recommendations, reasonings, and other notes are also to be placed here:

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### DRINKING WATER INSPECTION CONCLUSIONS (CHECK ONE)

These inspections and tests are not an evaluation of the water quality or how well the drinking water system works. Rather, this inspection is an indication of potential threats to the water well.

The water well appears to **pass** all aspects of the potential threat inspection. \_\_\_\_\_

The water well **fails** at least one aspect of the potential threat inspection. \_\_\_\_\_

Address inspected: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of inspection: \_\_\_\_\_

### SEPTIC INSPECTION RESULTS

#### Public Health Threats

- a. The tank has a safety-secured, tight-fitting lid.  
Pass Fail
- b. The tank is concrete on all sides or is an approved plastic tank, is structurally sound and holds effluent.  
Pass Fail
- c. There is no effluent on top of the tank, on the ground, or in a surface water body.  
Pass Fail
- d. The system does not discharge to a stream, tile, ditch, conveyance, or the surface to dispose of waste.  
Pass Fail

#### Cautionary Aspects

- e. The tank is less than 1/3 full of sludge, and scum levels are no more than 5 inches thick.  
Pass Fail
- f. The tank is sufficiently level to operate correctly.  
Pass Fail
- g. The invert of the outlet pipe in the tank is at or slightly above the effluent level.  
Pass Fail
- h. The baffles in the tank(s) are intact and functioning correctly.  
Pass Fail
- i. The tank does not show signs of excessive staining above the invert of the outlet pipe.  
Pass Fail
- j. The pump and alarm operate correctly (circle "N/A" if the system is not pump-assisted).  
Pass Fail N/A
- k. The effluent filter is working correctly (circle "N/A" if no filter exists).  
Pass Fail N/A
- l. There is no apparent soil settling or saturation over the d-box which indicates collapse or damage.  
Pass Fail
- m. Effluent flows freely into the tank when 35 gallons of water are placed into the tank from the structure.  
Pass Fail
- n. Effluent flows freely out of the tank with no runback when 35 gallons of water are placed into the tank.  
Pass Fail
- o. Excessive runback does not occur when the tank is pumped (circle N/A if it was not pumped).  
Pass Fail N/A
- p. Probing the absorption area shows normal liquid levels and biomat formation.  
Pass Fail

### DRINKING WATER INSPECTION RESULTS

- a. The wellhead (aboveground pipe) is not damaged and has a water-tight cap (circle N/A if there is no well or it is below ground).  
Pass Fail N/A
- b. The well is protected from surface water runoff (circle N/A if there is no well or it is below ground).  
Pass Fail N/A
- c. Distance between the onsite well and the onsite septic tank (50' for residences, 100' for commercial properties, and 200' for public water supply wells): \_\_\_\_\_ ft  
Pass Fail N/A
- d. Distance between the onsite well and the onsite septic drywell or absorption area (50' for residences, 100' for commercial properties, and 200' for public water supply wells): \_\_\_\_\_ ft  
Pass Fail N/A

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**SKETCH AND DRAWING**

The inspector shall attach a copy of the most recent, approved septic permit drawing obtained from the Department of Health if a drawing exists.

If the conditions observed in the field are different than the drawing obtained from the Department of Health or no current drawing exists, the inspector shall attach a neatly drawn sketch showing:

- a. the approximate distances from the nearest structures and property boundaries to the septic tank;
- b. the location of all tanks;
- c. absorption area;
- d. drywells (if applicable);
- e. potable water wells;
- f. additional pertinent information.

The inspector may provide a sketch *in addition to* the most recent approved septic permit drawing if they so choose.

**SIGNATURE OF THE INSPECTOR**

The undersigned hereby affirms that they themselves have performed the above inspection and have reported the facts as they are known to be. This inspection form has been filled out by the undersigned and was not done so by a third party (such as an additional employee of the same business, partner, or outside professional). The undersigned has done their due diligence in preparing this inspection and did not opt out of inspecting aspects based on convenience.

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Signature of Licensed Inspector	Company Represented	Date
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**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO BUYERS ABOUT SEPTIC SYSTEMS**

The routine maintenance of the septic system is an important factor in preventing the contamination of your drinking water and the high cost of replacing your septic system. Please contact the Department of Health if you are not familiar with the operation of septic systems. A septic system can be destroyed in only a few months if it is used or maintained incorrectly. **Please, at least do the following:**

- **Only put human waste and food down the drain. A septic system is not designed to treat any other type of waste.**
- **Never put medicines or chemicals down the drain as they may end up in your drinking water.**
- **Do not put fats, oils, or grease down the drain. They will destroy your system.**
- **Use your garbage disposal sparingly. Put as much food as you can in the trash.**
- **Fix leaky faucets and toilets quickly. They may overload and destroy your system.**
- **Do not wash many loads of clothes on the same day. This may also overload and destroy your system.**
- **Have your septic tank pumped at least every three years. Have it pumped more often if you have a large family or you use the garbage disposal extensively. This will help your system last longer.**

Additional information on how to protect your septic system is available by contacting the Department of Health at 574-235-9722 or by emailing [envirohd@sjcindiana.com](mailto:envirohd@sjcindiana.com).