

Septic Tank FAQ
Au Sable Forks Sewer District
Town of Jay

(For Sewer Emergencies, call 518-647-2204 ext 151)

“I’m a property owner in the Au Sable Forks Sewer District in the Town of Jay—does my building connect to a septic tank?”

YES. Unlike many public sewer systems, every building in the Au Sable Forks Sewer District has a sewer connection that passes through a septic tank.

“As a property owner, do I own and maintain the septic tank?”

NO. The septic tanks in Au Sable Forks are actually an integral part of the Au Sable Forks Community Wastewater Treatment Facility because much of the first stage of treatment, physical settling, occurs inside each tank. Because the Town is responsible for all aspects of the operation and performance of the wastewater treatment facility, the Town is also responsible for the operation, maintenance, and inspection of the septic tanks connected to the public sewer system.

“Does each building in town have its own tank?”

NO. MOST of the septic tanks in town are connected to a single building, but there are some that collect from two.

“What agency has regulatory authority over the Town of Jay’s operation of the treatment facility and the septic Tanks?”

NYS DEC.

“How often does the Town pump out each septic tank?”

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE: EVERY 5 YEARS

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENCE: EVERY 3 YEARS

COMMERCIAL: DEPENDS ON THE NATURE OF THE COMMERCIAL USE

There are some exceptions to these rules, based on criteria such as tank size, building size, and how certain tanks have performed since they were installed in 1991.

“Will the Town pump out the tank attached to my building whenever I want?”

NO. The Town maintains a schedule for all tanks in town, and we only inspect and pump out each tank as needed. However, should you experience a blockage, or suspect the tank attached to your building is not functioning correctly, PLEASE contact the Water/Sewer Department so we can evaluate the tank.

“Does the Town maintain the sewer line between my building and the septic tank?”

NO. The Town maintains and operates everything starting at the tank and running downstream of it towards the treatment facility (the septic tank, the 4” lateral connecting the tank to the sewer main, the sewer main, etc.). Maintenance and ownership of that portion of the sewer lateral installed between the tank and the building is the responsibility of the property owner.

“Who do I call if I suspect the tank is clogged, or if I have any other sewer emergency?”

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF WATER/WASTEWATER: 518-647-2204 EXT 151.

“I understand how often the tanks are pumped, but how often are they visually inspected?”

SOON TO BE ANNUALLY. Beginning in 2026, pursuant to the New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations (6 NYCRR) 750-2.8 (d) which states “if a septic tank is installed as part of the disposal system, it shall be inspected by the permittee or his agent for scum and sludge accumulation at intervals not to exceed one year's duration,” the Town of Jay will take steps to ensure each tank is inspected annually. In order to accomplish this, the Town will be adding high density EPS risers, steel frames and covers to the influent access lid of each septic tank during our normal, annual maintenance, over the course of the next five years.

“Can I cover the exposed lid in my yard?”

YES, but please be aware that any object covering the lid (a whiskey half-barrel planter, for example) **MUST** be easily movable by a single person (80lbs or less), and while Sewer Department employees will use care when moving an object, the Town will not be responsible for any damage as a result of this movement. Any other covering, such as mulch, should be in a layer thin enough to be swept off with a broom. Remember, we have 220 tanks to inspect annually—it is critical that we can quickly and easily lift the lid of each tank for inspection.

“Can I paint the exposed lid in my yard?”

YES. You may paint the lid, or have it painted, however you like. However, the Town will not be liable for any damage or marring of the finish that might occur due to routine use and inspection, or from natural causes, such as fading or corrosion.

"If I have any other questions regarding the septic tanks in town, whom should I contact?"

SUPERINTENDENT OF WATER/WASTEWATER

518-647-2204 EXT 151

WATERSEWERSUPER@TOWNOFJAYNY.GOV