

WHAT TO DO WHEN A SEPTIC TANK LOCATION IS UNKNOWN

1. Check the papers you saved when you purchased your home. There may be an “As Built Map” showing a sketch of the septic tank’s location. As Built maps have several numbers on them. If the map has numbers with “minimum” such as “10’ min.” then it is called a “How to Build Map”. They do not tell you exact locations of septic tanks and leaching fields.
2. Ask the previous homeowner and realtor, your local health and building departments, and the local septic companies. Someone may know where your septic tank is located.
3. If you have an unfinished basement, the main drainpipe that exits the wall of the house will usually indicate the line and the depth of the tank. Start looking in a straight line from the exit point. The tank is usually buried between 1’ to 10’ deep and 10’ to 20’ away from the house, depending on the year the home was built. This is just an educated guess. It can be closer or further away.
4. If difficult site conditions exist, such as rock, wells, etc., the tank may be located at a more distant location.
5. If you don’t have an unfinished basement, look for the roof vent that vents the sewer gases. Usually, the pipe to the septic tank will leave the house in a direct line from that vent.
6. Look for areas in the yard that are distinctive:
 - a. A round or rectangular pattern in the lawn that is a little indented or settled like a spoon
 - b. Bald spots where no grass is growing
 - c. Greener or higher grass in a particular spot
 - d. A decorative rock or bench or other object that may be used as a marker
7. Use a metal detector. Most septic tank lids have some metal in them.
8. Call a local electronic locating company.

ALWAYS USE CAUTION WHEN PROBING FOR THE TANK. IT CAN BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. YOU SHOULD ALSO CALL THE UNDERGROUND DIG ORGANIZATION IN YOUR STATE.