

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***My system is working fine, why do I have to have it inspected?***

A septic system can impact public health and the environment in a variety of ways, many of which may not be as obvious as surfacing sewage or a clogged toilet. In these scenarios a careful inspection of the system dramatically increases the chance that the problem will be discovered, and can then be remedied. In addition, regular inspections of a septic system should lead to a longer life for the system by fixing small problems before they become big problems.

### ***What will the ICHD do if I do not meet the deadline?***

We understand that any new regulation takes time to get used to, and are committed to working with homeowners rather than against them to improve the environmental health of our community.

### ***What system upgrades are required by the County?***

There are no upgrades for septic systems that are currently required by ICHD. Some upgrades may be recommended to improve the operation and maintenance of your septic system. The only septic system changes that will be required will be those related to a system that is failing or at imminent risk of failing.

### ***How much does an inspection cost?***

Depending on the size, complexity, and accessibility of your septic system components the cost of an inspection will vary. The inspection review and recording fee with the ICHD does not change depending on the system.

### ***What happens if my inspection reveals that something is wrong with my system?***

Depending on the nature of the problem, you may be required to repair or replace your septic system. ICHD staff can assist you with this process, as well as discuss options related to our loan program.

### ***Does my tank need to be pumped every time my system is inspected?***

No. Conditions within your septic tanks will determine whether or not the tank needs to be pumped.

### ***Are other counties doing the same thing?***

Yes. The twelve counties bordering Puget Sound are also implementing similar programs enforcing these State regulations.

### ***Who can do my inspection?***

A licensed Maintenance Service Provider is required to perform inspections of all alternative septic systems. Homeowners with conventional septic systems who live outside of the two focus areas (South Holmes Harbor and Penn Cove watersheds) may participate in the HOST program to become certified to inspect their own systems. A list of licensed Maintenance Service Providers, as well as a HOST program description is available online at [www.islandcounty.net/health](http://www.islandcounty.net/health) or at any of our offices.

### ***Do I need to be present at my inspection?***

It is strongly recommended that you be present during your inspection, however this is not a requirement. Your Maintenance Service Provider is a very knowledgeable professional and can provide you with tips and advice on how to best maintain a properly operating septic system.