

Question and answers

Why a septic tank emptying program?

The septic tank emptying program is the result of a provincial regulation dating from 1981, Q-2, r. 22. As of today, the Township of Melbourne has not implemented this by-law.

All Quebec municipalities are required to update their residual materials management plan (PGMR). This government requirement aims to put in place the conditions and regulatory framework in order to limit landfilling or disposal of ultimate residues.

The management of the septic tank emptying program was granted to the firm Beaugard septic tanks.

My installation has been emptied recently. Can I choose my year of service?

Unfortunately, this is impossible since, for reasons of coordination, each sector targeted for a year is completely drained. The circuits are established by the municipality and the service will be carried out every two years. If the installation has been drained during the previous year, an additional drain will not be harmful for this one. However, if the emptying is not carried out, the risks of clogging of the leaching field could generate much greater expenses.

Are the citizens of the Township of Melbourne the only ones to participate in such a program?

No, although the bylaw entered into force on August 5, 2019, the Township of Melbourne will integrate the service in 2020. On the other hand, several municipalities of the *MRC du Val St-François* have decided to take over the management of emptying septic systems in recent years.

Here are some of them :

- ✓ Bonsecours
- ✓ Maricourt
- ✓ Racine
- ✓ St. Claude
- ✓ Township of Valcourt

The results of a [MDDELCC survey carried out in 2013, show that 57%](#) of the emptying of municipal septic tanks is taken care of, either by a local municipality, an MRC or an intermunicipal management board.

How often will the septic tanks be emptied?

The septic tanks will be emptied every two (2) years for permanent residences and every four (4) years for secondary or seasonal residences, as stipulated in Q-2, r. 22, article 13. It is the municipality's assessment role to define whether a residence is permanent or seasonal. It is not possible to change the type of residence unless you change the assessment roll.

Application and compliance with provincial regulations are the responsibility of municipalities.

What should I avoid throwing in the drain, sink and toilet?

Food ♦ Hair ♦ Condoms ♦ Cotton swabs (Q-tips) ♦ Diapers ♦ Bleach ♦ Paper towels ♦ Newspapers ♦ Cooking oils and fats ♦ Kleenex ♦ Wet wipes ♦ Litter box ♦ Coffee grounds ♦ Medicines ♦ Cigarettes ♦ Non-biodegradable toilet paper ♦ Paint ♦ Pesticides ♦ Pool and spa chemicals ♦ Strong household cleaning products ♦ Feminine hygiene products ♦ Dental floss ♦ Fabrics ♦

♦ ** Avoid installing a kitchen garbage disposal ♦

What is the operating period of the Township of Melbourne's septic tank emptying program?

The systematic emptying will be planned for early 2020 and affected owners will be notified by mail.

Additional or emergency systematic emptying can be carried out all year round.

Why is Beauregard septic tanks the operator of the Township of Melbourne's septic tank emptying program?

A tender process was launched in 2019 inviting the various companies offering this type of service to submit a price list. Following the submission of 4 bids, Beauregard septic tanks being the lowest, the council awarded them the contract. In addition, entrepreneurs must agree to dispose of the sludge in order to comply with the highest standards of the *Ministère du Développement durable, Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques* (MDDELCC)

What types of systematic emptying are possible?

The majority of the tanks are emptied using the selective emptying technique.

The inlet pipe collects the water waste in the **septic tank**, long enough that the solid and liquid waste **is** separated from each other. ... Inside the **tank** bacteria from the wastewater breaks down the solid waste. These bacteria decompose the solid waste rapidly allowing the liquids to separate and drain away more easily.

How will the citizen be informed when his septic tank will be emptied?

A postal notice will be sent to the owner approximately 10 working days before the emptying period.

Is it possible to know the exact day of the emptying?

No. In this first year of implementation of the program, we are able to tell you the week when your emptying will be carried out. Systematic emptying are carried out Monday to Friday, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

What is the method of payment for emptying?

The municipality will collect these fees from the municipal tax bill.

Are there any grants to make a septic tank conform?

There is a government program to bring a septic tank into compliance. For more information on this program, visit the [Government of Quebec website](#).

What will be the consequences if the citizen calls another service provider?

If a citizen decides to do so, know that the systematic emptying ***will not*** be canceled. The citizen will be obliged to pay the costs for this emptying as well.

For large tank capacity and a citizen living alone, is he obliged to empty his septic tank every two (2) years, even if it is not all full?

This is a provincial regulation and the government has established the periodicity every two (2) years for permanent residences and every four (4) years for secondary or seasonal residences. People living alone or absent for a long period must still perform their systematic emptying.

For septic tank covers located under a patio, a porch or inaccessible for various reasons, what should the owner do?

It is up to the owner to ensure that the septic tank cover (s) are accessible.

A tank located under a structure such as a gallery, balcony or patio represents a danger for the operator who performs the emptying.

Regulation respecting occupational health and safety prohibit all work in an enclosed space or requiring a squatting position of the worker.

- In order to make the emptying of the tank safe, the owner must arrange a hatch on the top of the gallery (balcony or patio) or must remove boards so that the operator can work standing. He must also make sure to remove the covers before emptying and secure the underside of the structure to avoid accidental falls.

What do we do with residential sludge?

The mandate that has been granted to Beaugard septic tanks consists in responsible disposal of the sludge from the septic tanks. To achieve this, the sludge is sent to a site that is compliant and authorized by the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and the Fight against Climate Change to receive this material to divert it from landfill sites.

True or false

- Emptying a septic too often interferes with the proper functioning of the septic tank?

- **FALSE:** The technique of selective emptying makes it possible to return to the septic tank the bacteria necessary for the proper functioning of the septic tank.

- The citizen must see to the maintenance of the prefilter of his septic tank?
 - **TRUE.** It is advisable to clean the prefilter every 6 months for a better functioning of the septic tank. Just take it out and clean it with the garden hose.
 1. Secure the premises and make sure you have a garden hose nearby;
 2. Open the two covers of the septic tank;
 3. Remove the filter cartridge (filter) from the prefilter. It is recommended to wear protective gloves during these manipulations. To prevent suspended particles from migrating to the leaching field, the cartridge must always remain above the first opening of the septic tank (solids compartment);
 4. With a garden hose, clean the particles of the filter by letting the water run in the first compartment of the septic tank;
 5. Replace the cartridge and close the covers.
 6. This simple operation extends the useful life of your septic system and increases its efficiency.

- The owner must be present on the day of the emptying?
 - **FALSE:** Indeed, the owner's presence is not required. However, he must ensure that the necessary steps prior to emptying have been completed before the operator visits.

- Sump pits are not part of this program.
 - **FALSE:** In the municipal bylaw, the definition of a septic tank includes sump pits. They are subject to the same standards.

- The gray water tank also needs to be drained?
 - **TRUE:** Yes, by following the same emptying periods as the septic tanks.