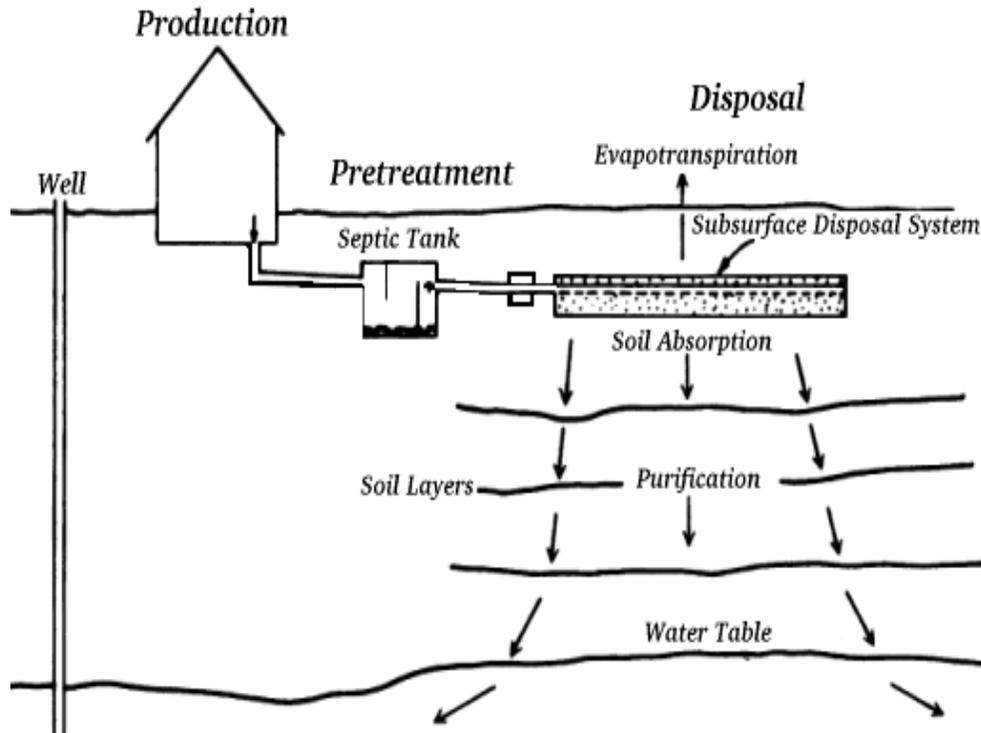


PROPER DRUG and MEDICATION DISPOSAL



One of the greatest threats to public health for Cape Cod is groundwater pollution. A study by the Silent Spring Institute documented the presence of pharmaceutical medications in ponds that interact directly with the sole source aquifer that makes up the drinking water for Cape Cod.¹

Whatever is put into the plumbing of a dwelling first enters the septic tank. There the waste is held long enough for the solids and liquids to separate; the solids settle to the bottom of the tank and the liquid waste exits the tank through the distribution box to the leach field. The liquid travels through the leach field into the soil where the properties of soil remove bacteria before it enters the ground water (or water table) below the dwelling. The properties of soils DO NOT remove chemicals from the liquid traveling through it.

You can help prevent the pharmaceuticals entering the water by properly disposing of your unused pharmaceutical medications.

Be Proactive and Dispose of Unused Medication In Household Trash. When discarding unused medications, ensure you protect children and pets from potentially negative effects by following these easy steps:

- *DO NOT FLUSH* unused medications and *DO NOT POUR* them down a sink or drain.
- *Pour medication into a sealable plastic bag. If medication is a solid (pill, liquid capsule, etc.), crush it or add water to dissolve it.*
- *Add kitty litter, sawdust, coffee grounds (or any material that mixes with the medication and makes it less appealing for pets and children to eat) to the plastic bag.*
- *Seal the plastic bag and put it in the trash.*
- *Remove and destroy ALL identifying personal information (prescription label) from all medication containers before recycling them or throwing them away.*

Consult your pharmacist with any questions.

¹Ruthann A. Rudel, et.al., "Identification of Alkphenols and Other Estrogenic Phenolic Compounds in Wastewater, Septage, and Groundwater on Cape Cod, Massachusetts" in *Environmental Science & Technology*, Vol.32, No.7, 861-869

Figure 1. <http://earthsci.org/education/teacher/basicgeol/sewage/septic-system.gif> University

Provided by: *Town of Dennis Board of Health and Dennis Water Quality Advisory Committee*