



# GBA SEPTIC SYSTEM GUIDE

YOUR VOICE ON THE BAY

[georgianbay.ca](http://georgianbay.ca)

# GBA Septic System Guide

## Purpose

The Septic System Guide provides GBA members and other Georgian Bay communities with practical information on septic systems to help you make informed decisions about your septic system





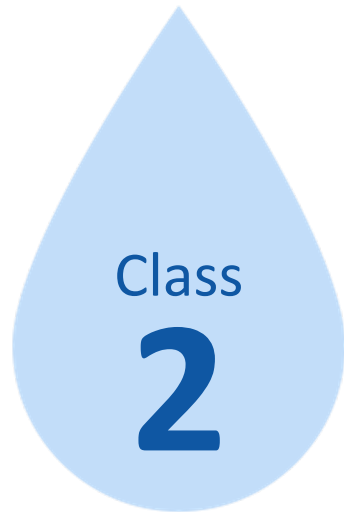
# What the Guide Includes



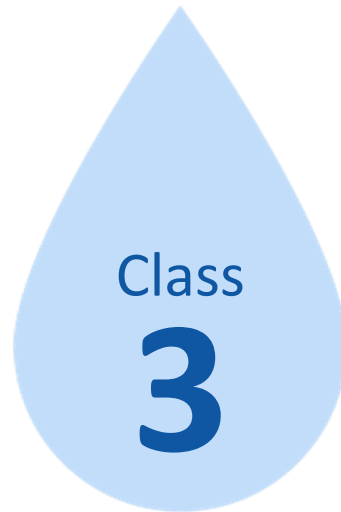
# Classifications of Septic Systems



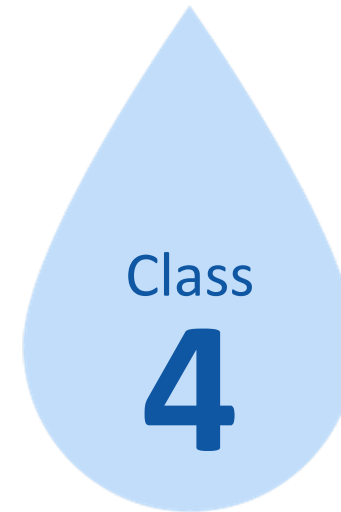
Chemical/  
incinerating/  
composting  
toilet



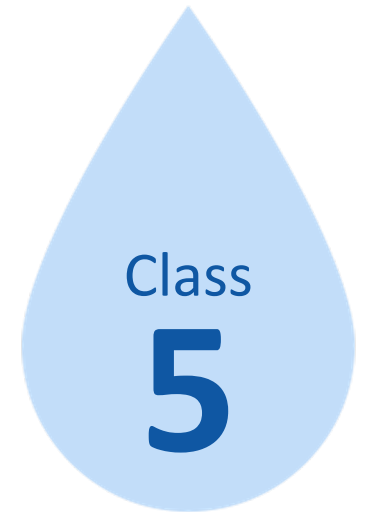
Greywater  
system



Cesspool



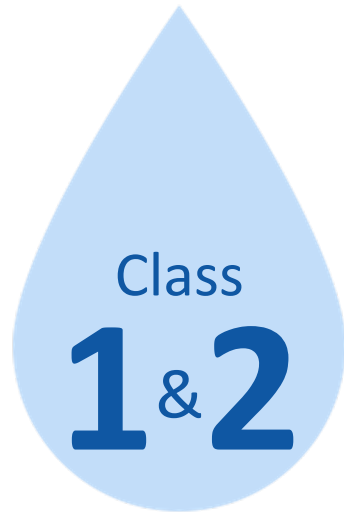
Leaching bed  
system



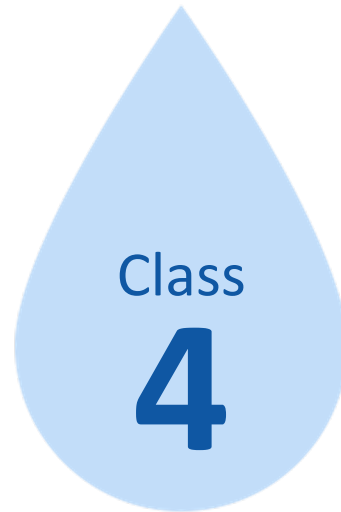
Holding tank



# Septic Systems Permitted in Georgian Bay



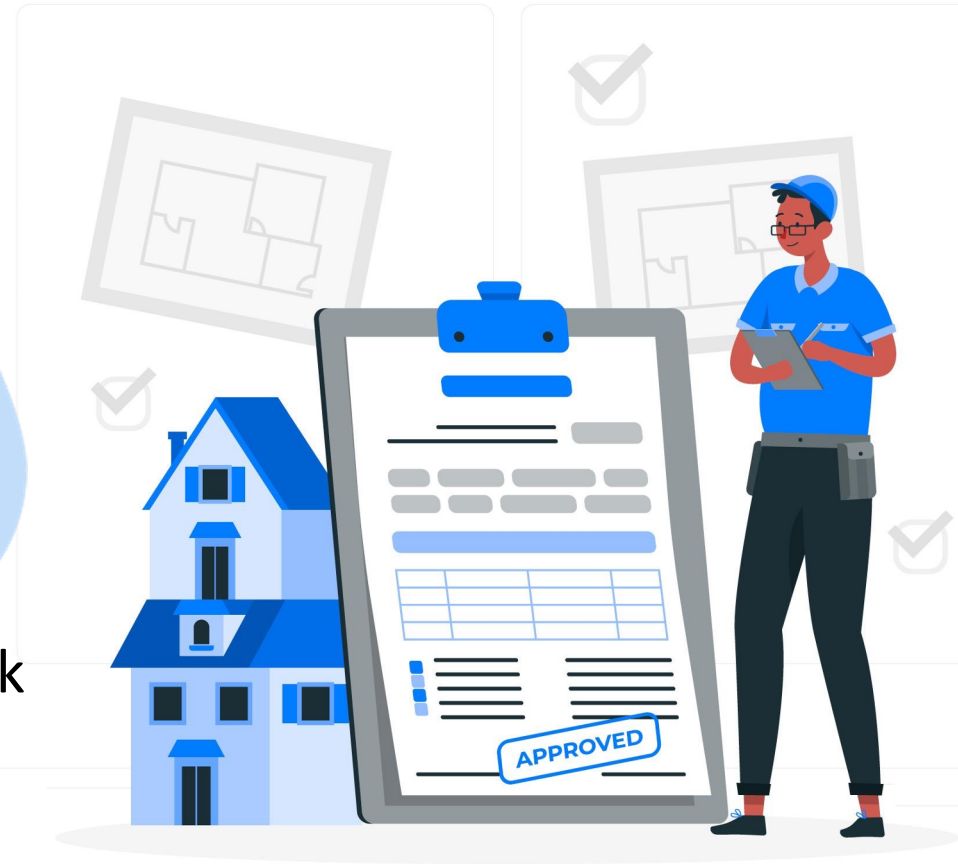
Composting toilet with a greywater system



Conventional leaching bed (with or without an advanced treatment unit)



Holding tank (if already in place)



# Evaluating Your Septic System Needs

## Important Considerations



Ontario Building Code



Maintenance & upkeep



Municipal policies & bylaws



Annual use capacity



Site conditions



Your financial investment



# Class 1 & 2: Composting Toilet With Greywater Pit

## Pros

- no annual pump-out
- low cost
- extended life if low annual use
- low environmental impact

## Cons

- no flush toilet
- water quality impact risk
- off-site materials transport required for some systems



# Class 4: Leaching Bed System

## Pros

- accommodates a flush toilet
- relatively easy to maintain
- extended life if low annual use
- pathogens should be captured
- extensive information and resources available

## Cons

- requires vigilant inspections and maintenance
- risk of nutrients impacting water quality
- expensive professional services may be required
- high cost to fix failures or replace system





# Class 4: With Advanced Treatment Unit (ATU)

## Pros

- smaller footprint allows more installation flexibility
- improved level of treatment
- annual maintenance contract ensures system is always well maintained

## Cons

- higher power requirement
- annual maintenance contract expense



# Class 5: Holding Tank

## Pros

- accommodates a flush toilet
- easy to maintain and manage
- plastic tanks are long lasting
- eliminates environmental risks

## Cons

- requires expensive annual pump-outs
- steel tanks rust out and must be replaced
- local municipal sewage system needs sufficient capacity





# Key Maintenance & Inspection Issues

All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the signs of failure for each system type</li><li>• Monitor systems for leakage and saturation</li></ul>
Class 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remove waste material when required</li><li>• Clean screen in greywater system</li><li>• Remove vegetation with deep roots on and around the greywater pit</li></ul>
Class 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inspect sludge level in tank and pump out when 2/3 full</li><li>• Clean filter</li><li>• Remove vegetation with deep roots on and around the leaching bed</li><li>• Avoid food waste and chemicals in the system</li></ul>
Class 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor tank level</li><li>• Inspect steel tanks for rust</li></ul>

# Important Considerations



## Soil Conditions, Installation and Maintenance

Understand the requirements and costs related to soil conditions, installation, maintenance, and inspections for each septic system type, and how these relate to your property and needs



## Protecting Water Quality

Keeping your system well inspected and maintained will reduce or eliminate the potential risks to water quality



## Protecting Your Investment

A septic system is a significant financial investment that requires protection through proper upkeep

# Takeaways

The GBA Septic System Guide provides information on

- why it's important to understand your property and needs before deciding on the right system for you
- what options are available and the pros and cons of each
- additional resources for each type of septic system

The GBA Septic System Guide does not replace

- the provisions of the Ontario Building Code
- advice from professionals
- municipal policies and by-laws





# Questions?

For more information  
and documents visit our  
[septic system webpage](#)