

Preventing Phosphorus Pollution

A Guide for Pound Ridge Residents with Septic Systems

Why It Matters

Pound Ridge is part of the Croton Reservoir Watershed, which supplies drinking water to millions of New Yorkers. When phosphorus from failing septic systems and fertilizer runoff enters our local streams, ponds, and wetlands, it can trigger harmful algal blooms and degrade water quality. As a resident, taking a few simple steps helps protect our shared environment and ensures clean water for generations to come.

Six Simple Ways You Can Help

1. Maintain Your Septic System

- Pump your septic tank every 3–5 years, depending on household size and usage.
- Schedule regular inspections to detect and repair leaks early.

2. Choose Phosphorus-Free Products

- Use phosphate-free detergents, dish soap, and household cleaners.
- Look for labels marked “phosphorus-free” or “0” in the middle number of the fertilizer ratio.

3. Be Smart About Lawn Care

- Don’t fertilize near waterways, storm drains, or paved surfaces.
- Use native plants in your yard—they require less fertilizer and water.

4. Handle Wastewater Responsibly

- Never pour chemicals, oils, or food waste down sinks or drains that lead to your septic system.
- Dispose of hazardous waste at county-approved collection sites.

5. Stay Informed and Spread the Word

- Learn how your household habits impact water quality.
- Talk to neighbors about maintaining healthy septic systems and landscapes.

6. Consider Upgrading Older Systems

- If your septic system is over 20 years old, it may need an upgrade or replacement.
- Newer systems can reduce phosphorus discharge and are more efficient.

Additional Resources

- Westchester County Dept. of Health: health.westchestergov.com
- Pound Ridge Town Code (Septic & Stormwater): ecode360.com/8164753
- NYS DEC Phosphorus Lawn Care Guidelines: dec.ny.gov

You Make a Difference

By caring for your septic system and making environmentally conscious choices around your home, you're protecting the health of Pound Ridge's environment and contributing to a cleaner, safer watershed for all.