



## Septic System Upgrades: FAQs and First Steps

Last updated: September 14, 2026

### Grant Applications

- Online or mail-in?
  - Town is a mail-in application
  - County/State are on 1 combined, quick online application (improved streamlined process)
- Reimbursement/out-of-pocket or directly paid?
  - County requires approval of application first and then the money goes directly to the installer (no out-of-pocket)
  - Town and State are reimbursement, so you can start work immediately (out-of-pocket)
- Who can help with the application process?
  - Concerned Citizens of Montauk: Kay Tyler - [ktyler@preservemontauk.org](mailto:ktyler@preservemontauk.org)
    - Can be most helpful if there is a problem with your application and with getting started. CCOM will advocate for you.
  - Vendors/Installers: some offer a service to take care of the reimbursement process for the homeowner - charge \$200-300
- What is covered?
  - Installment: State and County
  - Town money can be used for gap coverage for installation costs as well as miscellaneous (engineering, soil testing, survey, limited restoration costs etc.)
- How much is covered?
  - Town – up to \$20,000 for properties in the Water Protection District. See the [Water Protection District Maps \(PDF\)](#) on the Town website: Home>Government>Town Projects>Septic Incentive Program>Details and Forms
    - \$15,000 for properties outside Water Protection District
  - NY State – up to \$25,000
  - Suffolk County – up to \$20,000
- Applied before?
  - You may have to reapply for the County/NYS grant if you applied before 2025
  - If you applied before 2025 with the Town, you don't have to reapply
  - An application expires within a year for the Town, and is very easy to renew. You just email them and ask, can you extend our grant approval?

What will your costs be

- When you work with the engineer, you'll need a new land survey
- Soil testing
- Revegetation
- \$40-80K total, depending on many factors, including digging depth
  - If land has a lot of clay, they go deep

What to expect during installation

- 1-2 weeks for installation (very fast!)
- Property disturbance
- Do I have to move or fill my old septic?
  - You'll need to ask the engineer

What to expect after installation

- Septic odor for up to 1 year - some households have reported septic odor, but how long it takes to go away depends on usage
- Maintenance required
  - First 3 years free maintenance
  - Annual maintenance fees - \$400
- 2 green visible manholes that must be accessible for maintenance
- After you install, you're gonna have a mud pit for a while
- Mechanics of new system is loud - 1 person reported
- Do not shut your septic system off when you leave - it will cause problems

**Next steps for you:**

1. Get your 1) property deed, 2) most recent land survey and 3) C of O copies.
  - a. If you don't have them, email building dept to get the documents with whatever's on file - it's just to make sure it's not a new build
2. Apply to both Town (mail-in) and County/State (county and state are within the same online application) grants to get in line. They will ask for the documents in Step 1.
  - a. <https://www.ehamptonny.gov/587/Details-and-Forms>
  - b. <https://suffolkcountyny.gov/septicgrants>
3. Pick and contact an installer/vendor. Ask them about costs, what to expect, and what engineer they recommend. They have existing relationships with certain engineers.
  - a. Specify: I need this done right away, or I have time.
4. Submit other plans while on line for the approval (they will tell you what is needed).