

# Sewage Systems and Maintenance Legislation

Peterborough County-City  
**HEALTH UNIT**

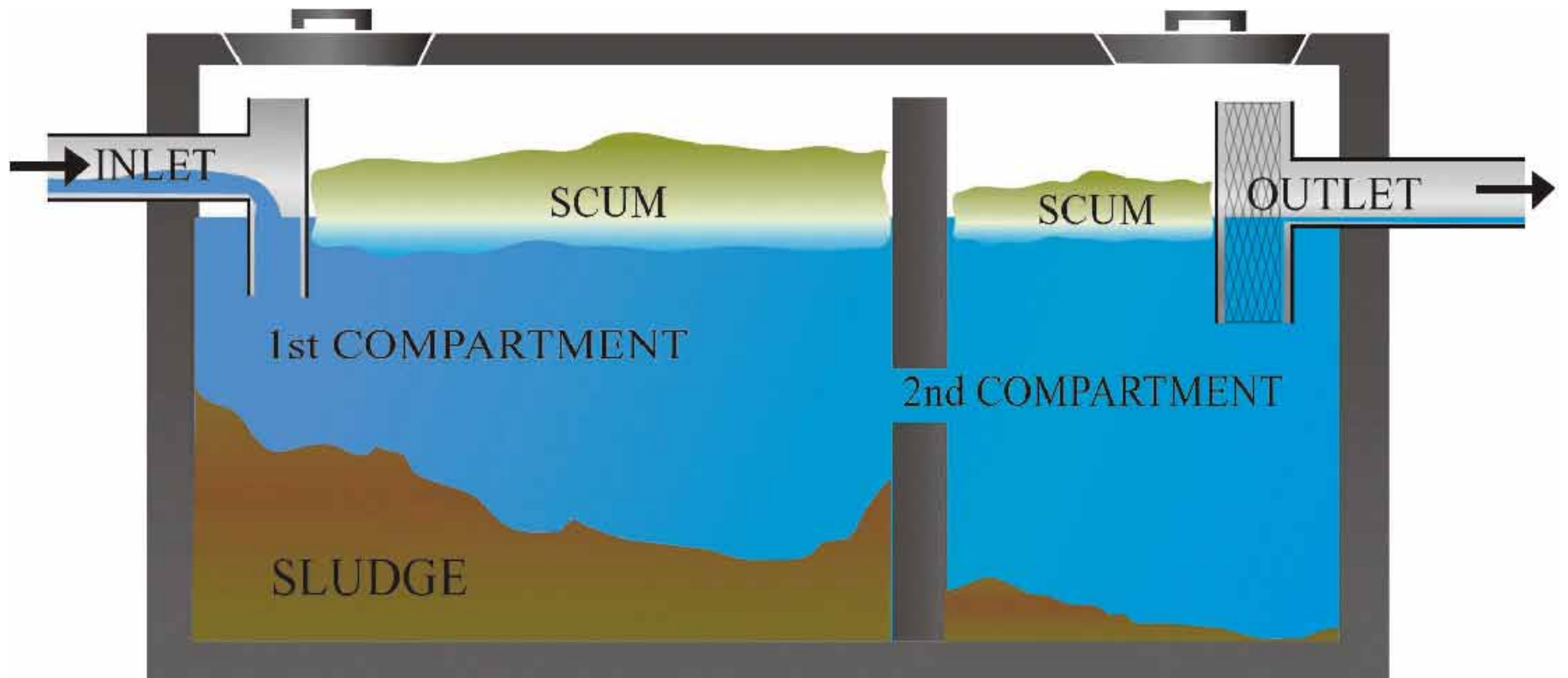
...because health matters!



# Septic System Components:

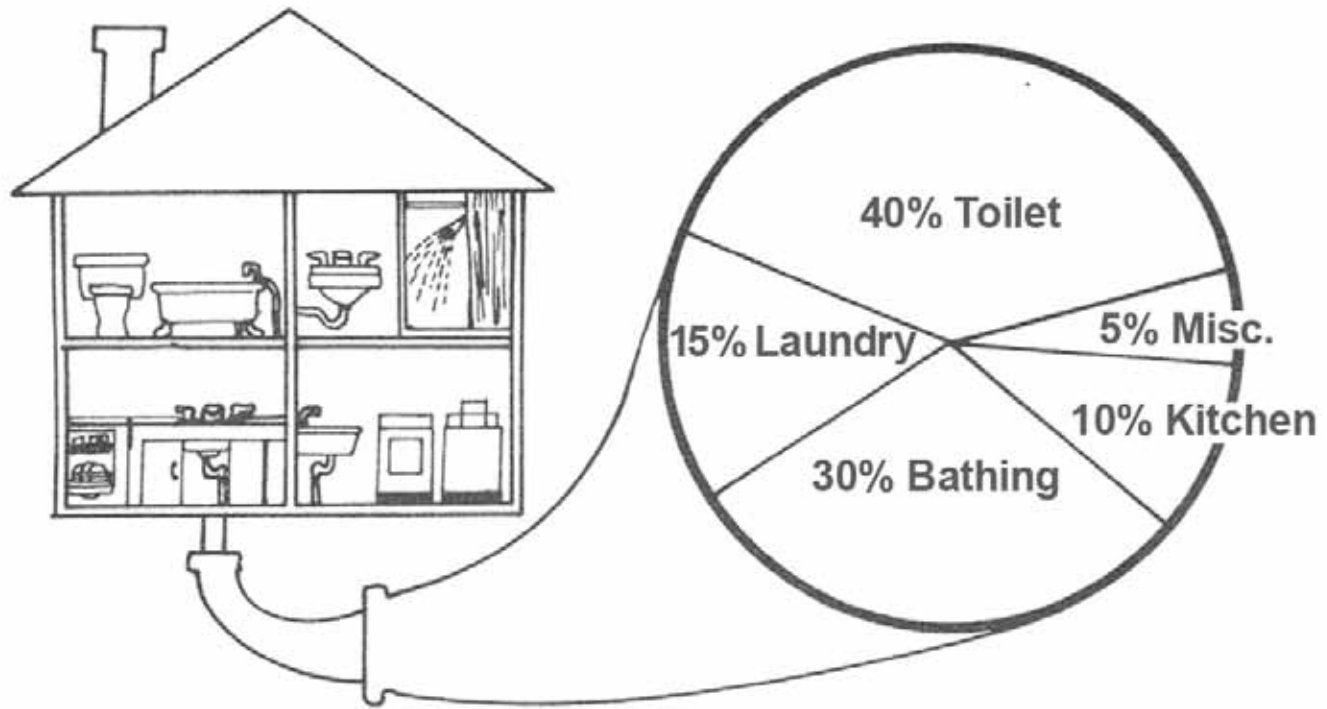
## **Septic tank**

settling and decomposition



To get clean effluent, you need:

- Very little movement in the tank so that settling will occur
- Good bacterial growth in the tank so that breakdown will occur
- Lots of room in the tank



Good bacterial growth...

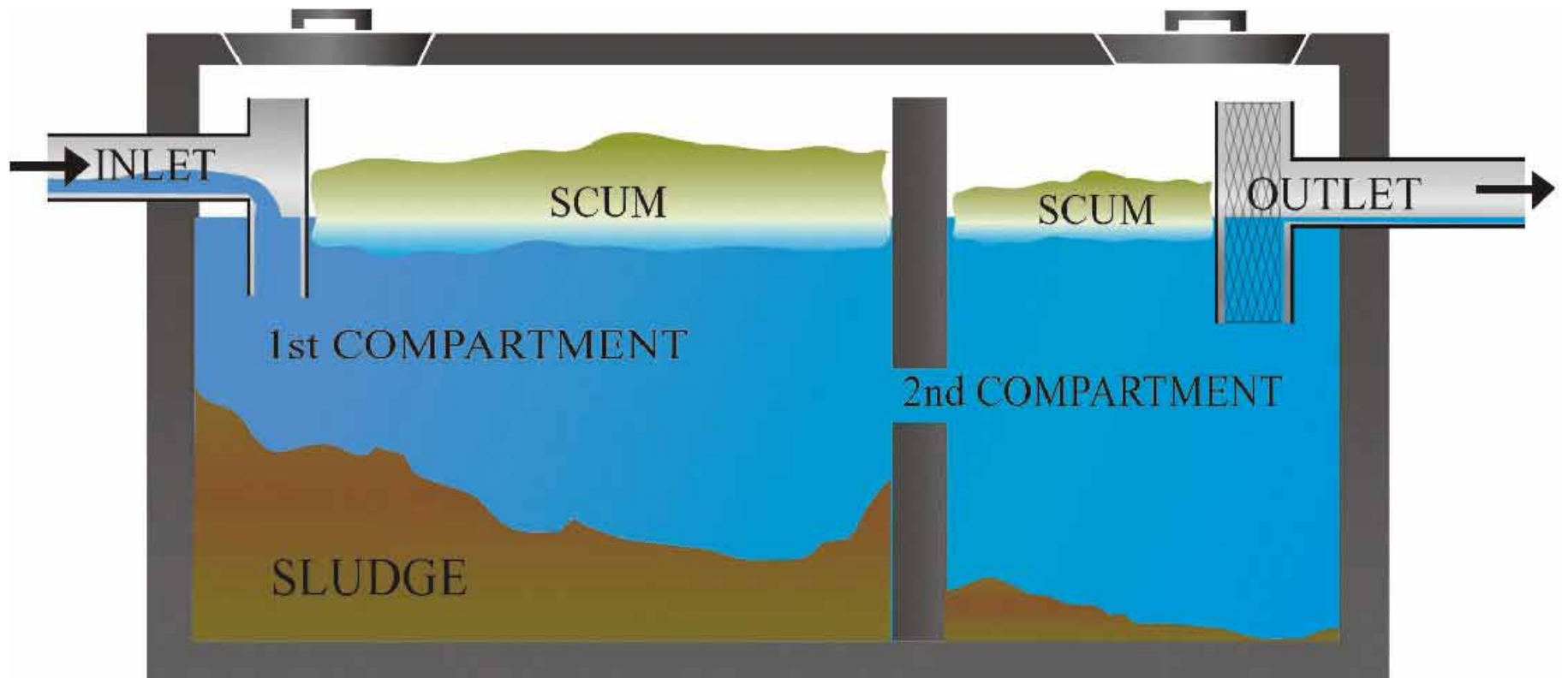
**No** hazardous chemicals, solvents,  
paints, disinfectants

# Room in the tank...

- **No** Diapers
- **No** Kitty litter
- **No** Cigarette butts
- **No** Sanitary products
- **No** Paper towels
- **No** Condoms
- **No** Cooking oils and greases

Lots of room...

- Pump the tank regularly



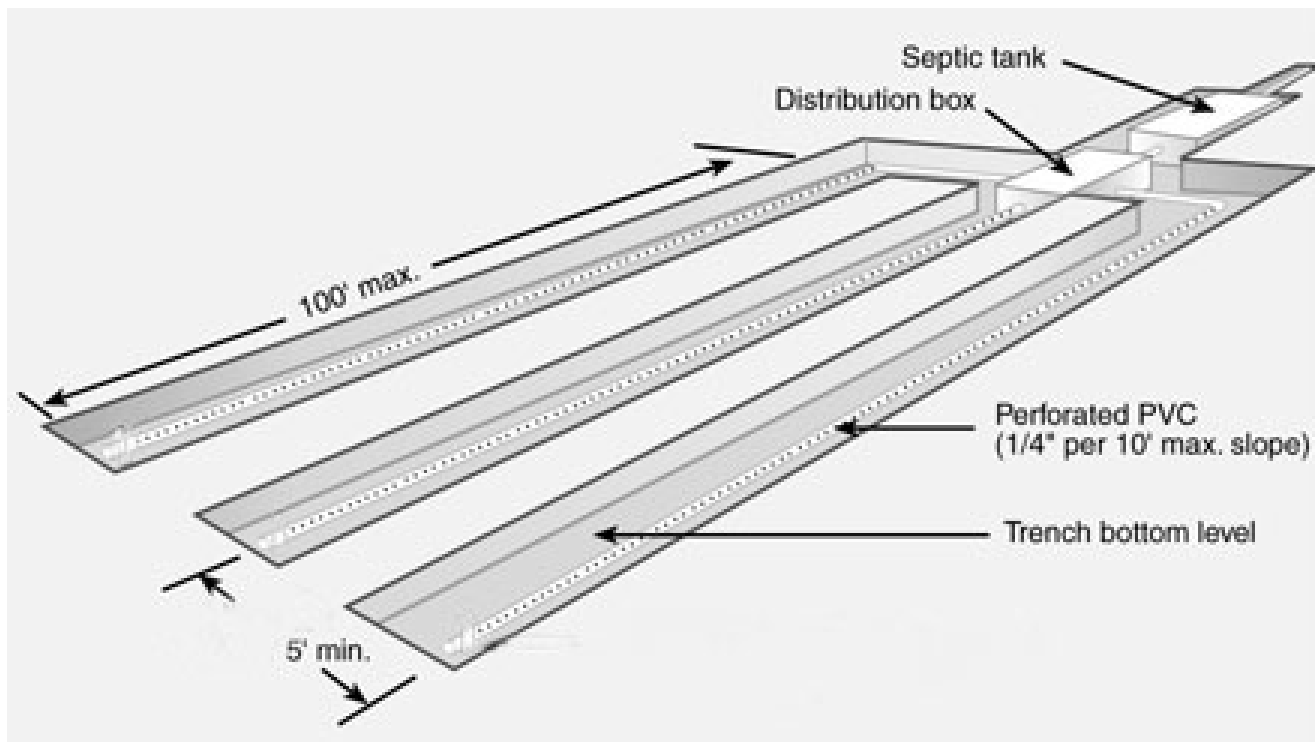
# Septic System Components:

## **Leaching bed**

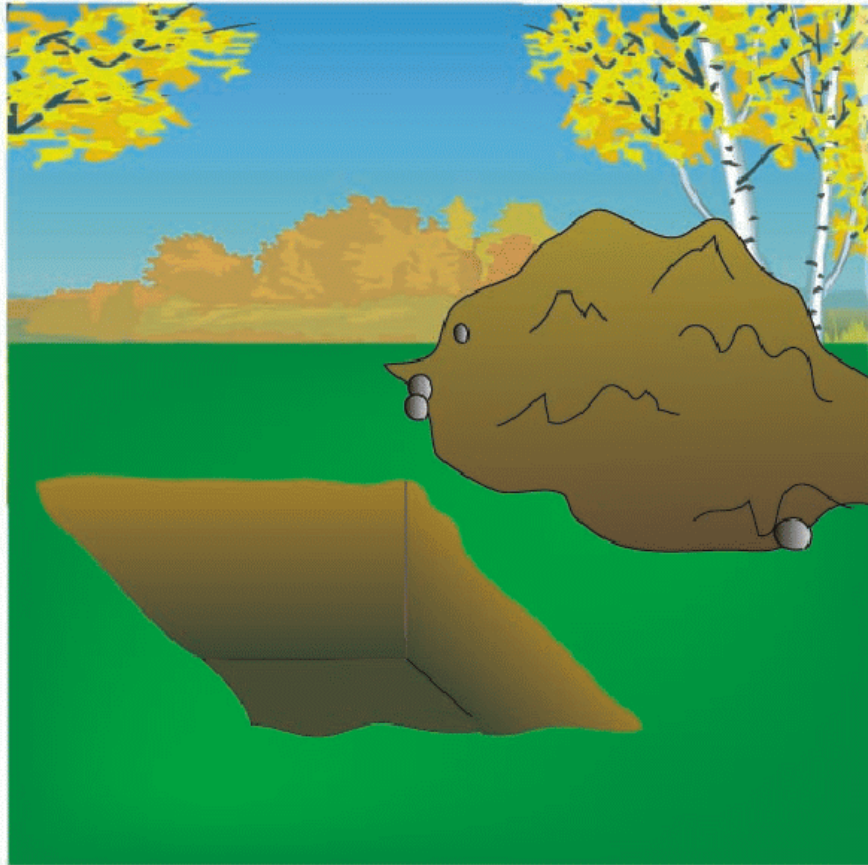
- disposal into the ground

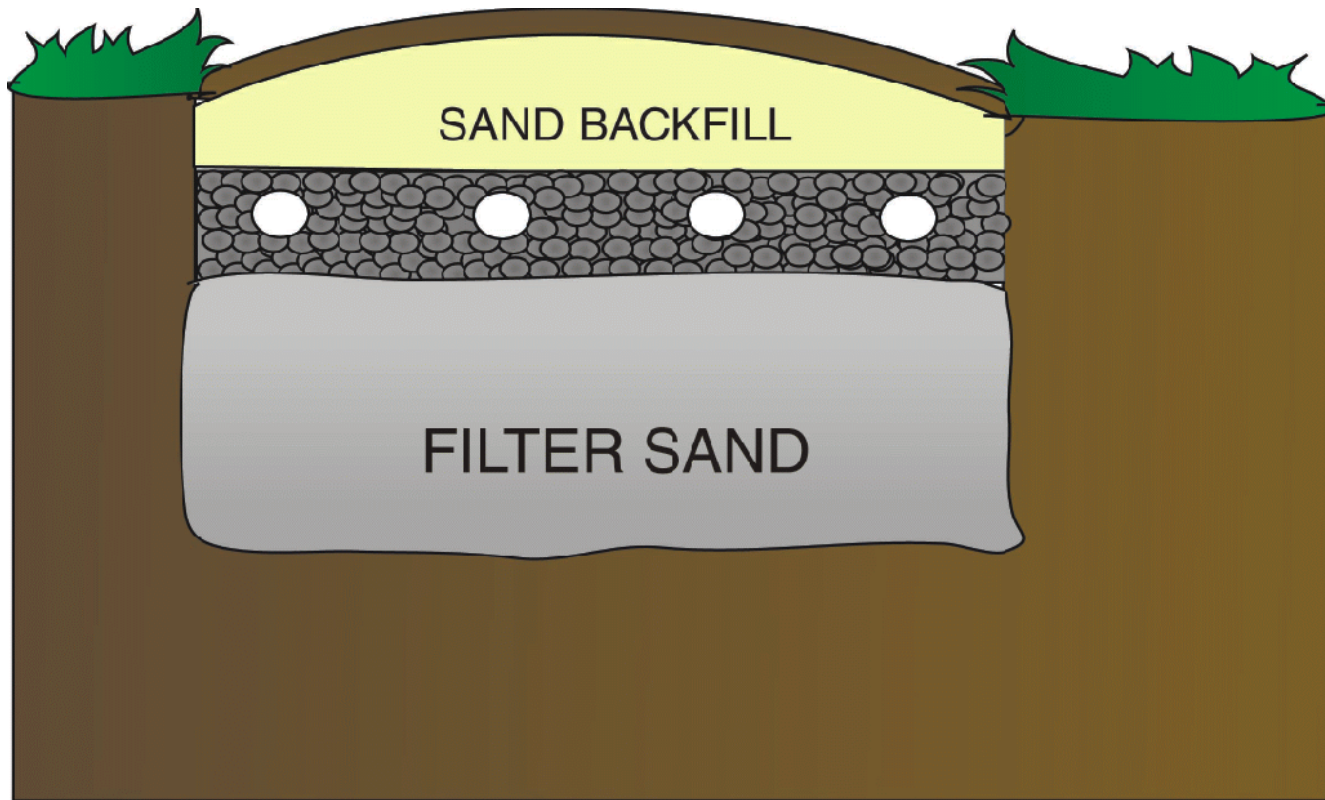
## Two main types of leaching beds:

- Absorption trench
- Filter bed









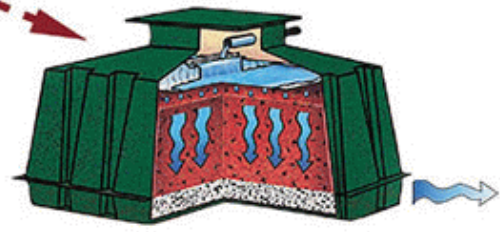
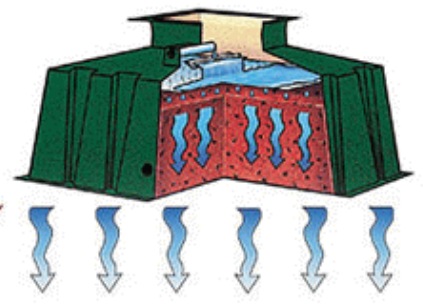
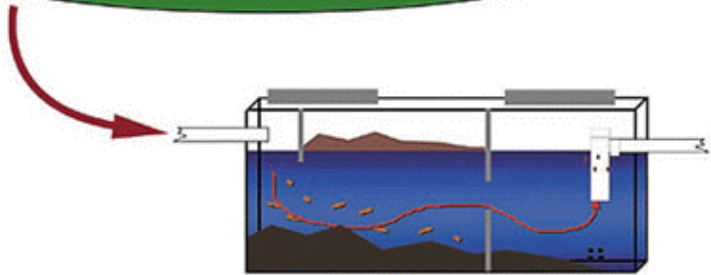
## Leaching bed needs...

- Low volume of clean, clear, non-toxic effluent
- Site maintained to prevent damage or saturation

## Maintain leaching bed site...

- No brush and trees
- Check for erosion, replace soil
- Surface water and eavestroughs away from bed
- No cars, no snowmobiles





# Alternative systems:

## Higher effluent quality

- Lower pathogenic bacteria content
- Lower nitrates
- Lower phosphorus

Alternative systems:

Often, reduced disposal area because  
of cleaner effluent

- Why is this of interest to us?



# Overground

- Leaching bed fails and sewage ponds on ground
- Owner by-passes sewage system or disconnects

# Underground

- Effluent travels through rock fissures or cracks
- System is located too close to well or surface water

# Building Code Act:

...an inspector shall inspect all sewage systems...for compliance with the requirements of Section 8.9...

A sewage system can discharge treated effluent into the soil,

but not:

- Onto the ground surface
- Into a well, watercourse, groundwater, surface water,...
- Anyplace else where it wasn't supposed to go

- Must be operated in accordance with the approved use and construction
- Maintain the area so that the system is not damaged and functions properly
- Maintain the working capacity by pumping the tank

# Compliance with maintenance and operational standards = ?

- Identifies systems which are already a problem
- Prevents damage to bed
- Prevents over-use, over-development

# Compliance Inspection Difficulties

- What's in the house? Matching the building, the permit, and the system
- Overlapping jurisdiction
- Seasonal or intermittent use
- Typical cost vs. legal expenses