



# Industry Report

## Revolutionizing Sewer Systems



Vacuum Sewer Collection Technology's Environmental Advantage

In the realm of modern infrastructure, vacuum sewer collection technology has emerged as a game-changer, revolutionizing the way we manage wastewater. With its numerous environmental benefits, this advanced system is proving to be a superior alternative to traditional gravity sewers and septic systems. In this article, we will delve into the world of vacuum collection technology, exploring its advantages and why civil engineers, contractors, owners, and operators should consider it for their projects.



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## The Basics of Vacuum Sewer Collection

Vacuum sewer collection technology employs a network of underground pipes that transport wastewater from individual households or buildings to a central collection station. Instead of relying on gravity, as in traditional systems, vacuum technology utilizes air pressure differentials to move the wastewater. By creating a vacuum in the pipe network, the system effectively "sucks" the wastewater towards the collection station.



## Environmental Benefits

### Reduced Water Contamination:

Vacuum sewer systems minimize the risk of groundwater contamination, preventing the release of untreated sewage into the environment. By maintaining a negative pressure within the pipes, the technology prevents leaks and infiltrations, safeguarding precious water resources and ecosystems.

### Efficient Water Usage:

Unlike traditional gravity sewers that require substantial volumes of water to maintain flow, vacuum systems consume significantly less water. The intermittent flush mechanism only uses small amounts of water when the vacuum is created, conserving water resources and reducing operational costs.

### Acid Sulfate Soils

Soils may contain Iron Sulfide particles, and disturbing them can lead to reactions with water or air, resulting in the production of various sulfates. Of particular concern is the creation of Sulfuric Acid ( $H_2SO_4$ ), causing severe damage to vegetation and harm animals. However, the primary consideration revolves around the substantial costs associated with treating the soil. Upon removal from trenches, the soil undergoes a treatment process, commonly involving the addition of lime, gypsum, or other alkaline products to raise its pH. This treated soil is then used as backfill, while any excess material must be disposed of in landfills. This treatment procedure is both time-consuming and expensive. Vacuum sewer systems are much less disruptive than traditional sewer systems, reducing acid sulfate soils.

### Minimal Disruption:

Vacuum collection technology is ideal for urban environments where excavation can be challenging and disruptive. The system's small-diameter pipes can be installed via shallow trenches or even horizontally bored beneath existing infrastructure, reducing the need for extensive construction and minimizing environmental disturbances.

### Flexibility and Scalability:

The modular nature of the technology allows for easy adjustments to accommodate population growth or changing needs. This scalability ensures efficient resource utilization and minimizes the risk of overburdening the environment with underutilized infrastructure.

### Sustainable Operation:

Vacuum collection technology enables centralized wastewater treatment, promoting efficient and sustainable operations. By consolidating wastewater in a central station, treatment processes can be optimized, leading to improved energy efficiency and reduced carbon footprint.

## Comparing with Traditional Gravity Sewers and Septic Systems

When compared to traditional gravity sewers, vacuum systems present significant advantages. Gravity sewers rely on topography and require deep trenches for installation, resulting in higher construction costs and potential disruption to the landscape. In contrast, vacuum systems can adapt to challenging terrain and reduce construction complexities, making them cost-effective and environmentally friendly alternatives.

Septic systems can pose environmental risks due to poor maintenance or malfunctioning. Vacuum sewer technology eliminates the need for individual septic tanks, reducing the risk of groundwater pollution and streamlining maintenance efforts.



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## By embracing vacuum collection technology, we can pave the way towards a cleaner and more sustainable future.

As our society strives for sustainable and eco-friendly solutions, vacuum sewer collection technology emerges as a compelling choice for civil engineers, contractors, owners, and operators. Its environmental benefits, such as reduced water contamination, efficient water usage, minimal

excavation, flexibility, and sustainable operation, make it a superior alternative to traditional gravity sewers and septic systems. By embracing vacuum collection technology, we can pave the way towards a cleaner and more sustainable future.



**Airvac, Inc.**  
4217 N Old US Highway 31  
Rochester, IN 46975 | USA  
[www.airvac.com](http://www.airvac.com)  
[info@airvac.com](mailto:info@airvac.com)  
1-800-AIRVAC9



**Roediger Vacuum GmbH**  
Kinzigheimer Weg 104  
Hanau, Hessen 63450 | Germany  
[www.roediger-vacuum.com](http://www.roediger-vacuum.com)  
[info@roediger-vacuum.com](mailto:info@roediger-vacuum.com)  
+49 6181 309 275