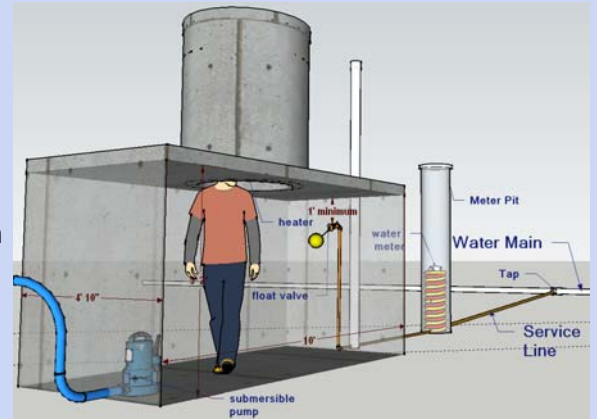


# Clean, Protect, and Maintain Your Cistern

## Clean

You should have your cistern cleaned and inspected every year. Over time, dirt collects on the bottom of the cistern, and microbes grow on the cistern walls. To keep your cistern disinfected, add about 1 ounce of 5-6% unscented liquid household bleach for every 200 gallons in your cistern, once a week. But don't overdo it — bleach is bad for your septic system. For more information, see [http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe\\_water/cisterns/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe_water/cisterns/).



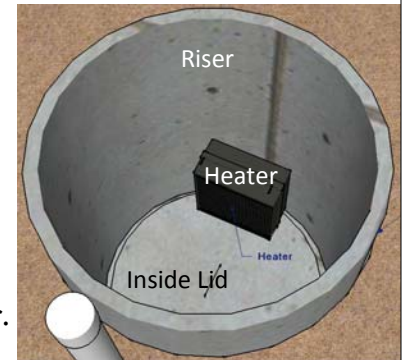
You should have a tight-fitting inner lid to your cistern box. Your concrete riser (manhole) should be properly sealed to the cistern box, to prevent heavy rains from seeping through the joint into your cistern. The top of your cistern's concrete riser (manhole) should have at least 6-8" of ground clearance to keep rainwater runoff out.

## Protect



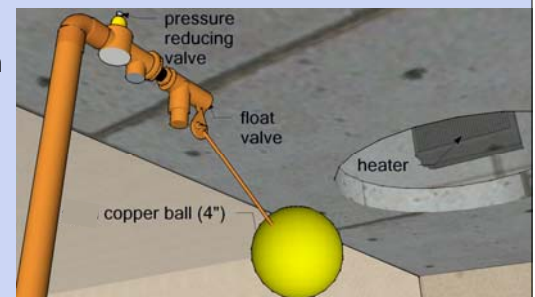
6-8" ground clearance

Your cistern's float valve is above the water level in your cistern, and can freeze shut during the winter. Install a heater in the cistern ring during the winter to prevent such an incident.



## Maintain

The property owner is responsible for any repairs from the connection with the water main. This includes cisterns and service lines, which can crack; valves, which can corrode; and your pump and pressure tank, which can fail.



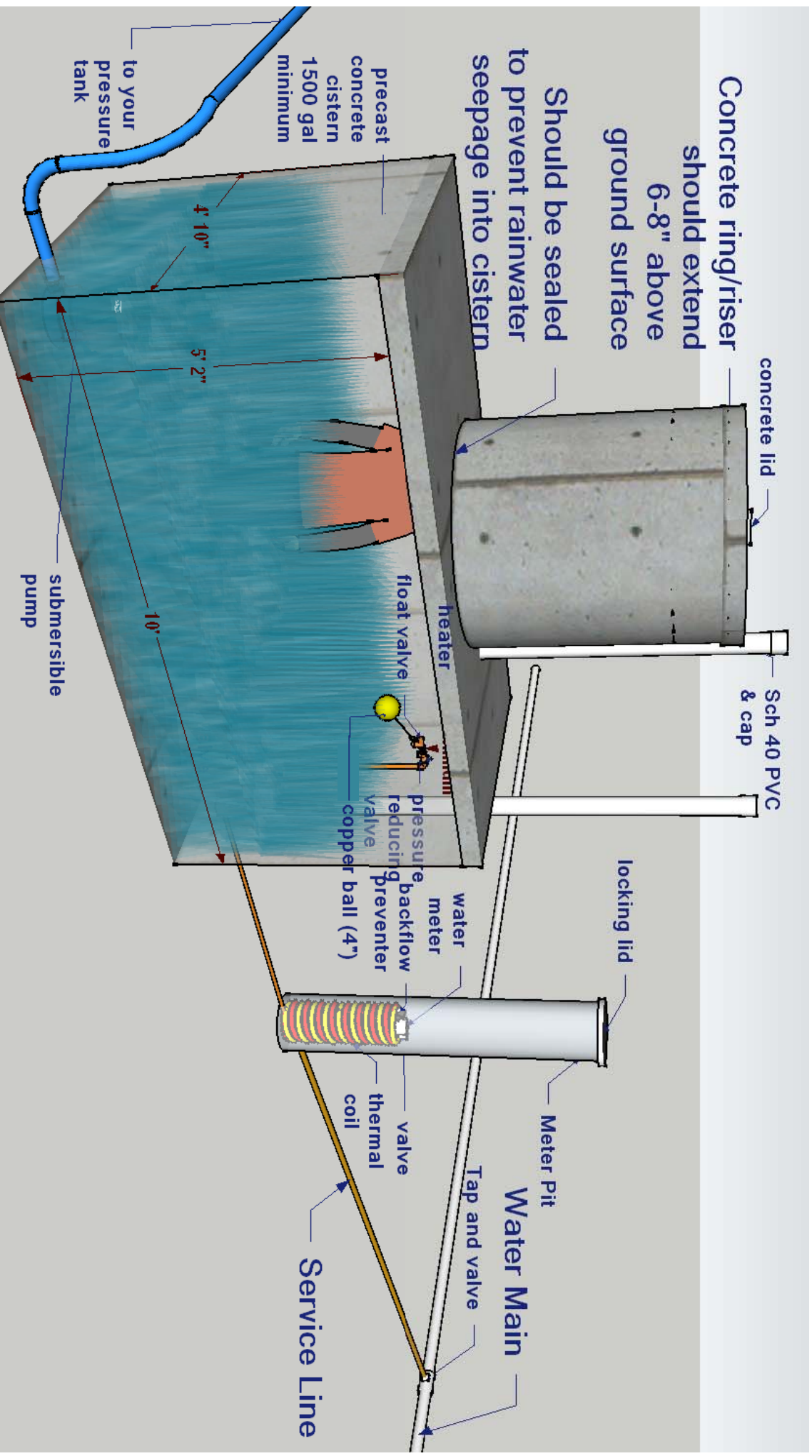
The float valve is the most critical component. If it fails or gets stuck in an open position, your cistern will overflow. It should be replaced at least every 10 years. Check your water usage and periodically look at your cistern and the area around it. Make sure there is no water and that the ground does not "look wet". If you notice dampness or water, call the office.

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# Watch "Your Cistern: An Animated Tutorial," at [www.mountainmutual.com](http://www.mountainmutual.com)



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