

Advanced WasteWater Specialists, LLC

Protecting water quality in the "Last Best Place"
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A properly installed and maintained septic system should provide decades of trouble-free, low-cost service.

- The **Number One** reason for a septic system failure is - Feminine hygiene products or Condoms wrapped around the septic pump impellor which seizes the motor. Don't flush anything which does not decompose quickly and naturally. Pump repair costs can be anywhere from \$500-1000.
- The original system was designed with a specific load factor. **Do not** add additional water loading devices such as water softeners, foundation drains or sumps, hot tubs, pool filters, or bedroom additions without consulting the septic designer / installer.
- Laundry should be staggered throughout the week to reduce overloading the septic tank. Consider using a high efficiency type machine which operate with much less water.
- Keep your plumbing fixtures in good working condition. **A very slow leaking toilet can easily add over 350 gallons per day** to your septic system, which is more than the total design loading for a 3 bedroom home.
- Switch to a liquid style laundry soap. The powdered style tends to have a lot of filler material in it which solidifies in the septic tank and clogs the system.
- Cooking greases and fats should **never** be sent down the drain. Grease does not breakdown easily and floats to the surface in the septic tank which reduces the working capacity volume of the system.
- Garbage disposals should only be used for vegetable materials and never for meat products. Vegetable by-products will make the septic tank work harder, but it also creates additional heat which is a positive and tends to balance out the good and bad. The tank capacity must be increased 50% allow for the disposal emulsification of foods.
- Reduce the usage of strong cleaning chemicals. Excessive amounts will reduce the amount of anaerobic activity within the septic tank. Bleach kills bacteria which are needed to make the septic system work efficiently.
- Pharmaceuticals or any medications should **never** be flushed into the septic system. The chemicals within the drugs do not break down easily and have been identified as migrating through the soil and into the water aquifers.

- **Always** call your septic specialist to locate **ALL** of the components of your septic system before doing any digging anywhere on your property. Although you may think you are no where near your tank/s or drain field there are plumbing and electrical components leading to your system. The buried components only have 24" or less of soil coverage. Landscapers and irrigation system installers are the cause of numerous costly service calls.
- Keep diagrams and any operational manuals showing the location of your septic tank and drain field. Keep your septic tank access lids accessible for inspections and cleaning. Install risers (access extensions between the tank access lid and ground level), if necessary. Riser lids must be secured and accessible to eliminate water draining into the system and allow access to the equipment.
- Conventional septic tanks should be pumped out every 3-5 years depending on the volume of use.
- If pumps are used in the system they likely utilize a filter or screen. These need to be cleaned annually if not more often.
- Rain water or spring runoff should be directed away from the septic tank and drain field locations. Water **cannot** be allowed to pool on top of the drain field area.
- All traffic of any type should not be allowed to cross the septic field. The buried components only have 24" or less of soil coverage and are susceptible to the compaction created. In addition frost may be driven in with foot, hoof, or vehicles of any type. Frost or compacted soils will create septic field failures which are expensive to repair.
- Septic field additives or chemicals should never be required if your system is designed and operating properly. If the system is malfunctioning or smells bad then consult a professional septic service company to identify and rectify the problem.

WARNING

Never enter the septic tank! Only a trained professional should ever enter a tank. Never allow anyone to go down into a septic tank alone. Toxic gases are produced by the natural treatment processes in septic tanks and can kill in minutes - even just looking in the tank can be dangerous.