DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT #2
Operation and Maintenance of Your Septic System

1. **Practice water conservation.**
   - use low use fittings on showers and toilet tanks
   - wash clothes on the large load cycle, and not all loads on the same day
   - repair leaking fixtures, especially the toilet tank
   - do not run water needlessly, e.g., when brushing teeth turn water off

2. **Avoid unnecessary water entering your septic tank and drainfield**
   - Garbage disposals add an extra load of solids to your septic tank.
   - Do not pump ground water from your sump into your septic tank.
   - Divert storm runoff and snow melt water-slope away
   - Down spout water should be directed away from the septic system
   - Do not place a sprinkler head over drainfield
   - Water softener discharge can be diverted to a separate seepage area
   - Swimming pool or hot tub water should not go into the septic system
   - All wastewater must go into the sewer line and then into the septic tank

3. **Be careful what kinds of products you flush down the drain.**
   - Disposable diapers, paper products, plastics products and food products add to solids in the septic tank and may cause clogging of a sewer line
   - Use household cleaning products in moderation
   - Never dump toxic materials down the drain: gas, oil, paint, pesticides, as they may kill bacteria or cause ground water contamination
   - Additives are typically not necessary

4. **Soil cover and landscaping**
   - Add a layer of top soil over sandy soils over the drainfield and plant grass
   - Do not cover the drainfield with clay soils as this restricts oxygen
   - Mound the soil slightly over the drainfield to divert rain water or runoff.
   - Trees or plants with deep roots should not be planted over or next to the septic tank or drainfield.

5. **Protecting the septic system area**
   - Protected from freezing if vehicles (including snowmobiles), sidewalks or even foot paths cross them during freezing weather.
   - Do not place parking areas, driveways, swimming pools, outbuildings, garages, or other structures over the septic tank or drainfield.

6. **Signs of problems**
   - Slow drains or back up in the wastewater drains
   - Lush green grass in the yard or weed growth in the lake
   - Ponding of liquids, soggy area or foul smelling seepage in the yard
   - Call a septic tank pumper, a septic system installer or the health department.
   - Sewage contains microorganisms that are infectious and may adversely affect human health