

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