

The Best Ways to Kill Your Septic System

Septic systems are a very simple way to treat household wastewater and are easy to operate and maintain; however homeowners must take a more active role in maintaining and preserving their septic systems.



DO NOT FLUSH

- Coffee grinds
 - Dental floss
 - Disposable diapers
 - Kitty litter
 - Feminine hygiene products
 - Cigarette butts
- Some things just don't belong in your septic system
- Condoms
 - Paper towels
 - Fat/grease/oil
 - Hazardous chemicals like paint/ thinners/varnishes/pesticides/waste oils/photographic solutions
 - Medications



Newton County Health Department

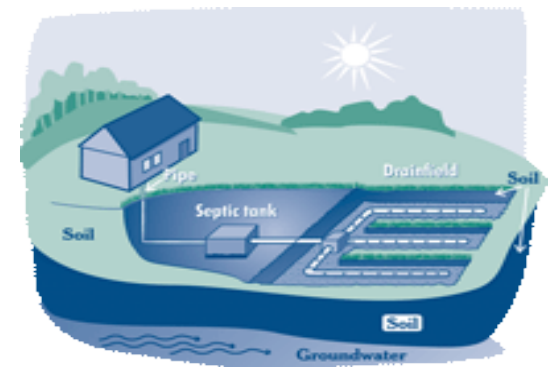
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Newton County Health
Department

Homeowner's Guide to Septic System Maintenance



Tel: 417-451-6549 extension 3



Septic System Do's and Don'ts

Septic system maintenance is often compared to automobile maintenance because only a little effort on a regular basis can save a lot of money and significantly prolong the life of the system. Sound



Prevention and common sense go a long way in preserving the life of your septic system

septic system operation and maintenance practices include conserving water, being careful that nothing harmful is disposed of through the system, and having the system inspected annually and pumped regularly by a licensed professional. Contact the health department for a

current listing of licensed professionals.

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DO

- **DO** Have your septic system inspected annually by a licensed professional.
- **DO** Have your septic system pumped out regularly by a licensed professional.
- **DO** Keep your septic tank accessible for inspections/pumping.
- **DO** Call a professional when experiencing problems or if there are signs of failure.
- **DO** Keep a detailed record of repairs/pumpings/inspections/ permits issued and all maintenance activities.
- **DO** Conserve water to avoid overloading the system. Repair any leaky faucets or toilets.
- **DO** Divert other water sources like roof drains, house footing drains and sump pumps, driveways and hillside runoff away from the septic system. Excessive water keeps the soil in the drain field from naturally cleansing the wastewater. Use curtain drains/surface diversions/downspout extensions and retaining walls to divert water.
- **DO** Obtain the proper permits as required by the Newton County Health Department.
- **DO** After installation is completed observe the absorption field area for settling and black dirt should be added and grass seeded immediately to eliminate water from ponding on the field and restricting the absorption fields ability to treat the wastewater. This will also inhibit erosion.

Don't

- **DON'T** Go down into a septic tank for any reason. Toxic gases can be explosive and cause asphyxiation in minutes. Always contact a professional.
- **DON'T** Allow anyone to drive or park over any part of the system. The only thing that should ever drive over the absorption field is a lawnmower.



Some things just don't belong in your septic system

- **DON'T** Cover the absorption field with a hard surface (concrete/asphalt). Grass is the only cover for promoting proper function of the absorption field. Grass will prevent erosion and help remove excess water.
- **DON'T** Plant trees/shrubbery/gardens over or near the absorption field, roots can clog and damage drain lines.
- **DON'T** Pour grease/cooking fats/paint/chemical drain openers/solvents/pesticides or other organic chemicals into your drain.
- **DON'T** Use your toilet as a trash can. Keep coffee grounds/bones/cigarette butts/disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products/paper towels/facial tissues/medications out of your septic system.
- **DON'T** Ever add enzyme and yeast additives to the septic tank in hopes of improving bacterial action. None of these products have been proven beneficial and some actually cause damage to soil and vegetation and may pollute groundwater.