

Do Your Part. Be SepticSmart!



Shield Your Field
Divert rain and surface water away and avoid parking vehicles and planting trees on your drainfield.



Groundwater Recharge
Drainfield
Septic Tank
Protect It and Inspect It
A typical septic system should be serviced every one to three years by a septic service professional.

Aquifer

Don't Overload the Commode
Don't flush diapers, wipes or other items meant for a trashcan down the toilet.

Toilet paper only

Don't Strain Your Drain
Use water efficiently and stagger use of water-based appliances, such as your washing machine or dishwasher.

Pump Your Tank
Ensure your septic tank is pumped at regular intervals as recommended by a professional.



Think at the Sink
Limit use of your garbage disposal and avoid pouring fats, grease, solids and harsh chemicals down the drain.

EPA's National Partnership Agency Program

Keep It Clean
If you are on a well, test your drinking water regularly to ensure it remains clean and free of contamination.

 **EPA**
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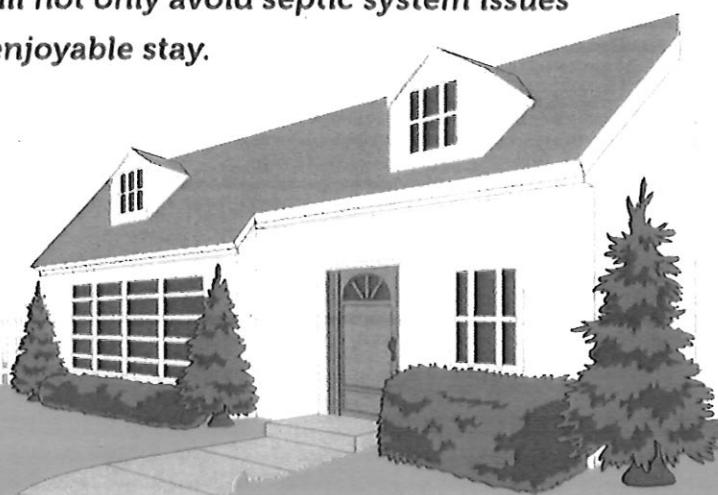
Welcome! Did you know this property is served by a septic system?

Please help us be SepticSmart by taking steps to ensure that our septic system continues to operate as expected – helping protect the environment and ensuring a good stay. Whatever goes down our toilet, sink, or shower pipes ends up in our septic system and affects how well it works.

Please do your part to be SepticSmart by taking these simple steps:

- Think at the Sink!** Please keep grease, fats, harmful chemicals, and hair out of the drain. They can clog or damage our system and can cause an expensive plumbing mess.
- Don't Overload the Commode!** Please do not flush non-degradable items such as dental floss, diapers, wipes, hygiene products, or hair.
- Be WaterWise!** Stagger use of water-based appliances among house guests. All of the water in this home's pipes ends up in the septic system. Efficient water use improves the operation of a septic system and reduces the risk of failure.
- Be Mindful of Guests!** If there are more people staying in our home than our septic system was designed to support, your guests may overload the system and mess up your stay. This is one reason why we cannot accept more than the maximum number of guests.
- When in Doubt, Follow an Easy Rule of Thumb:** Do not flush anything besides human waste and toilet paper. If you perceive an issue with our plumbing, please call _____ . In the rare instance that sewage should back up into our home, avoid contact with it.

Following these easy steps will not only avoid septic system issues but will also help ensure an enjoyable stay.

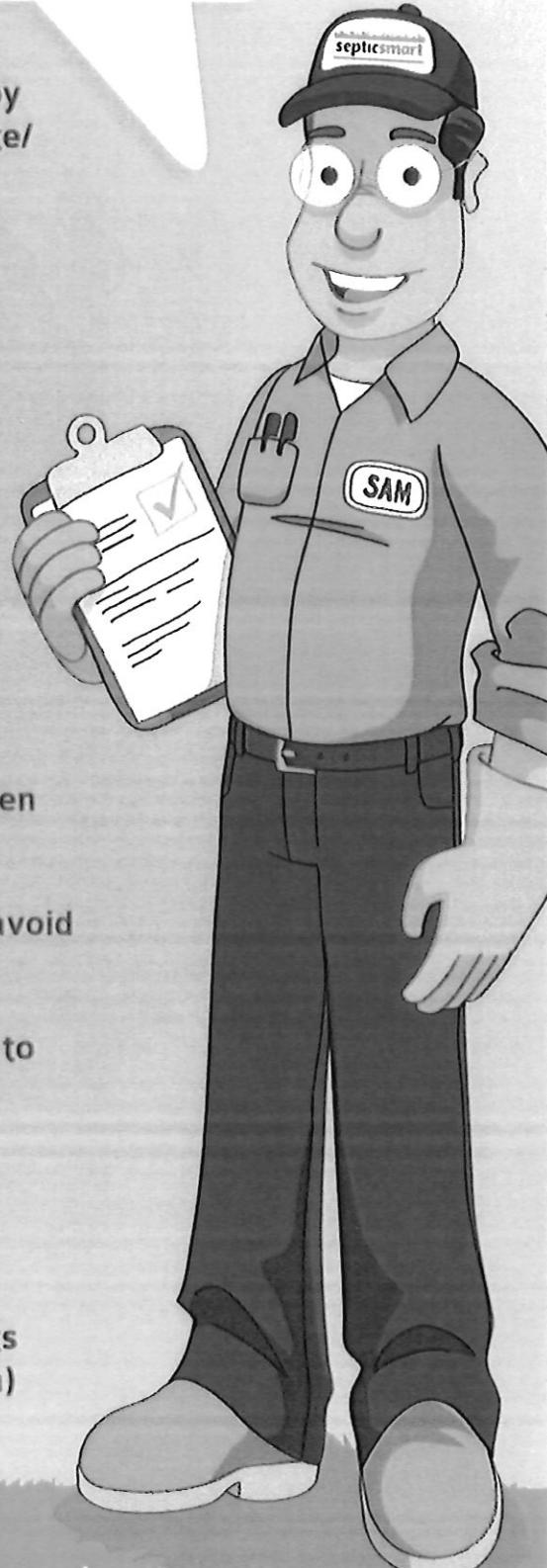


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Top 10 Ways to Be a Good Septic Owner

- Have your system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to your state/local health department's recommendations
- Have your septic tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years
- Avoid pouring harsh products (e.g., oils, grease, chemicals, paint, medications) down the drain
- Discard non-degradable products in the trash (e.g., floss, disposable wipes, cat litter) instead of flushing them
- Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank
- Follow the system manufacturer's directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives
- Repair leaks and use water efficient fixtures to avoid overloading the system
- Maintain plants and vegetation near the system to ensure roots do not block drains
- Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low- or phosphate-free
- Prevent system freezing during cold weather by inspecting and insulating vulnerable system parts (e.g., the inspection pipe and soil treatment area)



Proper Landscaping On and Around Your Septic System

The drainfield is a vital part of your septic system. Having the right landscaping on and around your system is important, as tree and shrubbery roots can grow into the drain lines. Also, other heavy items like cars and livestock can break drain lines. Strong roots and heavy items can cause the drainfield to fail. And if the drainfield fails, your system fails.



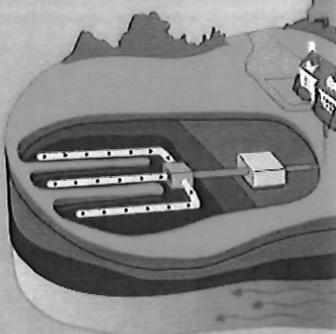
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Here are some tips to keep your drainfield out of harm's way.

Locate your septic tank and drainfield. Then make sure the area is clear of:

- Underground sprinkler lines
- Decks and patios
- Sports courts
- Storage sheds
- Swing sets
- Sand boxes
- Driveways
- Vehicles
- Swimming pools



Plant native, drought-tolerant plants. These are some of the best for your septic system and its drainfield:

Grass:

- Fescue
- Lawn
- Ornamental grasses
- Wildflower meadow mixes

Groundcovers for sun:

- Bugleweed (Ajuga)
- Carpet heathers (Calluna Vulgaris)
- Cotoneaster (Cotoneaster)
- Ground ivy (Glechoma)
- Kinnikinnick (Arctostaphylos)
- Periwinkle (Vinca)

Groundcovers for shade:

- Bunchberry (Cornus)
- Chameleon (Houttuynia)
- Ferns
- Mosses
- Sweet woodruff (Galium Odoratum)
- Wild ginger (Asarum)
- Wintergreen (Gaultheria)

Follow Septic Sam's landscaping do's and don'ts:

Don't:

- Plant a vegetable garden on or near the drainfield.
- Put plastic sheets, bark, gravel or other fill over the drainfield.
- Reshape or fill the ground surface over the drainfield and reserve area. However, just adding topsoil is generally OK if it isn't more than a couple of inches.
- Make ponds on or near the septic system and the reserve area.

Do:

- Plant grass or keep existing native vegetation. These are the best covers for your drainfield.
- Direct all surface drainage away from the septic system.
- Use shallow-rooted plants (see plant list above). Tree and shrub roots can grow into the drainlines, clogging and breaking them.
- Avoid water-loving plants and trees.
- Make sure the tank lid is secure.

For more SepticSmart tips, visit www.epa.gov/septicsmart



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Do Your Part, Be SepticSmart: The Do's and Don'ts of Your Septic System

Learn these simple steps to protect your home, health, environment and property value:



Protect It and Inspect It:

Do:

- Have your system inspected (in general) every three years by a licensed contractor and have the tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years.

Think at the Sink:

Don't:

- Pour cooking grease or oil down the sink or toilet.
- Rinse coffee grounds into the sink.
- Pour household chemicals down the sink or flush them.

Do:

- Eliminate or limit the use of a garbage disposal.
- Properly dispose of coffee grounds & food.
- Put grease in a container to harden before discarding in the trash.

Don't Overload the Commode:

Don't:

- Flush non-degradable products or chemicals, such as feminine hygiene products, condoms, dental floss, diapers, cigarette butts, cat litter, paper towels, pharmaceuticals.

Do:

- Dispose of these items in the trash can!

Shield Your Field:

Don't:

- Park or drive on your drainfield. The weight can damage the drain lines.
- Plant trees or shrubs too close to your drainfield, roots can grow into your system and clog it.

Do:

- Consult a septic service professional to advise you of the proper distance for planting trees and shrubs, depending on your septic tank location.

Don't Strain Your Drain:

Don't

- Concentrate your water use by using your dishwasher, shower, washing machine, and toilet at the same time. All that extra water can really strain your septic system.

Do:

- Stagger the use of water-generating appliances. This can be helpful especially if your system has not been pumped in a long time.
- Become more water efficient by fixing plumbing leaks and consider installing bathroom and kitchen faucet aerators and water-efficient products.

For more SepticSmart tips, visit: www.epa.gov/septicsmart