



SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

HOW YOU CAN MAINTIAN YOUR SEPTIC DRAINFIELD:

- **Flush only human and animal waste, toilet paper, and wastewater.** Non-biodegradable items such as diapers, condoms, sanitary napkins, baby wipes, cigarette butts, and cat litter should not be flushed.
- **Avoid planting trees or shrubs near the drainfield.** The roots of trees and shrubs can cause damage to your drainfield by infiltrating the pipes and clogging them. Avoid planting any deep-rooted plants near the drainfield area to prevent any potential damage.
- **Don't park or drive heavy vehicles over the drainfield.** The drainfield is designed to handle the wastewater from your septic system, not the weight of vehicles. Parking or driving heavy vehicles over the drainfield can compact the soil, disrupt the drainage process, and potentially damage the pipes. Be mindful of where you park and avoid driving over the drainfield area.
- **Limit water usage.** Excessive water usage can overload your septic system and put additional strain on the drainfield. To prevent any issues, it's important to conserve water and avoid overloading the system. It's best to fix any leaks, use water-efficient appliances, and spread out your water usage throughout the day.
- **Regularly pump and maintain your septic tank.** Regular pumping and maintenance of your septic tank are vital for your septic system's overall health and functionality, including the drainfield. Have a professional inspect and pump your septic tank regularly to remove any accumulated solids and prevent them from reaching the drainfield.
- **Be mindful of chemical usage.** Certain household chemicals, such as bleach, antibacterial soaps, and harsh cleaning products can disrupt the balance of bacteria in your septic system. This imbalance can negatively impact the drainfield's ability to break down and treat wastewater. When possible, opt for septic-safe or environmentally friendly alternatives.
- **Regularly inspect the drainfield area.** Keep an eye on the drainfield area for any signs of trouble such as standing water, foul odors, or overly lush vegetation. These signs can indicate a problem with your drainfield. If you notice any issues, schedule a septic maintenance service call to assess and address the problem.
- **Direct water away from drainfield.** Directing water away from your drainfield is important so it doesn't become oversaturated, hindering its filtering capabilities. You can

do this by draining your pool or hot tub away from the area and directing your gutter downspouts away from the drainfield.

SIGNS YOUR SEPTIC TANK NEEDS MAINTENANCE:

- **Slow drains:** If you notice that your sinks, toilets, and other drains are taking longer than usual to empty, it may be a sign that your septic tank needs cleaning.
- **Foul odors:** One of the most obvious signs that your septic tank needs cleaning is a foul odor coming from your drains or yard.
- **Standing water:** Standing water in your yard or around your drainfield can indicate that your tank is full and unable to absorb any more wastewater.
- **Lush grass:** If you notice an area of your yard with unusually lush grass it may be a sign of a septic tank issue. The excess nutrients from the tank can fertilize the surrounding soil, causing plants to grow more rapidly.
- **Sewage backup:** Slow drains or sewage smells in your home are signs of a sewage backup. This can cause extensive damage and pose serious health risks, so it's important to call a professional immediately.
- **Gurgling sounds:** Gurgling sounds coming from the toilet or drains indicate that there is some kind of blockage in either the vent pipe, sewer line, or septic tank itself.
- **It's been a long time:** If it's been more than three years since your last tank cleaning, then you're probable due for a septic service.