

How to Care for Your Septic System

Households not served by public sewers usually depend on a septic system to dispose of wastewater. Properly maintaining your septic system now will maximize your system's life, and good maintenance reduces the risk of contaminating your well water, and may save you from costly repairs or system replacement. Taking care of your septic system isn't difficult. The following guidelines will help you properly maintain your septic system.

Divert Rainwater Away From the Septic Drainfield

- A waterlogged drainfield won't absorb liquid waste. Roof gutters and foundation drains should divert water away from the septic drainfield.

Keep Trees Away from the Septic System

- Trees with very aggressive roots, such as willows, should not be planted near the septic system.

The Toilet Isn't a Garbage Disposal

- Never flush cat litter, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, coffee grounds, or cigarette butts. Put these items in the trash can.

Avoid Hazardous Chemicals

- Varnish, paint thinners, motor oils, gasoline and other similar chemicals can ruin your system and are a hazard to groundwater. Dispose of them properly.

Protect the System from Damage

- Do not drive over the drainfield, build a structure on top of it, or cover it with concrete or asphalt.

Perform Regular Maintenance

- Solids must eventually be pumped from the tank. It is recommended that you have your septic tank pumped every 3-5 years of full time use.

If you have any questions about your septic system or proper maintenance, you can contact the Stark County Health Department at (330) 493-9904. Additional information can also be found online at <http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/wastewater.cfm>