



HOMEOWNER'S GENERAL INFORMATION AND PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE TIPS

Ultimately, it is the homeowner's responsibility to make sure their sewage disposal system is properly maintained. It is in the homeowner's interest to prolong the life of their septic system by performing regular maintenance as recommended by the design engineer.

PROPER CARE OF YOUR SYSTEM INCLUDES:

- Know where your system and replacement area are located. Keep as “as-built” system diagram in a safe place for reference.
- Keep traffic such as vehicles, heavy equipment, or livestock off the system and replacement area.
- Do not plant trees or other water-loving, deep-rooted plants in the drain field area.
- Plant perennial grasses such as rye or tall fescue over the drain field to reduce erosion and to absorb moisture and nutrients. **Do not overwater.**
- Take immediate action to correct the problem in the event of an “alarm” condition.
- Regular maintenance on your system by a septic professional should be performed.
- Keep track of flow volume using control panel data or winter water meter data. Pay attention to unusual spikes in flow. This may suggest excessive water use, leaking fixtures or groundwater infiltration into the system.
- Practice water conservation and spread out your water use throughout the week to keep from overloading the system.
- Never discharge water from roof downspouts above or onto the surface of the drain field. Surface water should be directed away from the drain field.
- Be aware of what goes into the system. Protect the ecology of microorganisms living in the tank that break down solids into gas and water.
 - ✓ Minimize the use of household cleaners, strong chemicals, and bleach.
 - ✓ Never flush medications. Manage long-term use of antibiotics which could kill the microorganisms in the tank.
 - ✓ Avoid draining large volumes of hot water at one time. Do not drain a Jacuzzi or hot tub into the septic tank. Avoid long hot showers or back-to-back hot water laundry loads.
 - ✓ Never introduce commercial “additives” to the tank.
 - ✓ Do not wash grease, oils and lotions down the drain
 - ✓ Avoid the use of the garbage disposal, when possible.
 - ✓ Do not flush cigarette butts, plastics, dental floss, or other solids. These do not break down and will stay in the tank until pumped.
- Try to be present when the tank is pumped. Direct the pumper to clean the effluent filter and/or the pump biofilter over the “solids” side of the septic tank.
- Exclude rodents from valve boxes.

All County publications are available in alternative formats (Braille, Large Print, or CD), upon request. Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-4381 (Voice) 473-3232 (TDD/TTY) or by e-mail at disabilityaccess@marincounty.org. Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.