



Septic System Maintenance Checklist

Pump the septic tank on a regular basis.

This must be done to pump out the sludge that collects at the bottom of the tank. It will not go away on its own. It is not biodegradable, and it will cause damage to the system.

Suggested pumping schedule:

- annually for a family of five people or more
- every other year for a family of three to four
- every three years for two people living in the house

Discuss the above schedule with your septic company to determine which schedule ideally fits your system's needs. Every system and family is different. The use and condition of your septic system are factors to be considered.

Pump Grump recommends annual pumping and inspection of residential tanks. The reason is that if a component (such as an outlet tee or baffle) falls off, the result can cause significant damage to your septic system. Catching a missing part in one year is much better than catching it after three or four years. Replacing septic systems can be quite costly.

Do not overload your septic system.

Use water sparingly. If possible, do full laundry and/or dishwasher loads at off-peak times. (For example, do not do a load of laundry at the same time people are taking showers.) It is suggested you do only one laundry a day. Doing more than that taxes your system; it adds too much water for your system to handle.

Avoid putting kitchen grease down the drain.

It is suggested that pans coated with cooking grease or oil be wiped clean with a paper towel. This minimizes the grease and oil that goes into your septic system.

Do not flush inorganic materials down the toilet.

These include diapers, sanitary napkins and disposable diapers. It is also recommended that you do not flush "flushable" wipes.

Garbage Disposals:

If you use a garbage disposal, use it sparingly or increase your septic maintenance (pumping) schedule.

Check all plumbing fixtures in the home for leaks.

It is surprising how much water a leaky faucet or toilet will add to your septic tank.

Do you think you have tree roots clogging your pipes?

Ask your contractor how to remove them.

The U.S. Government Department of Health, Education and Welfare Public Health Service says, "A septic tank system will serve a home satisfactorily only if it is properly designed, installed, and adequately maintained. Even a good system that does not have proper care and attention may become a nuisance and a burdensome expense."