



SUTTER COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Animal Control
Building Inspection
Emergency Services
Environmental Health
Fire Services
Planning

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Tips on Caring for your Septic System

1. Install water saving plumbing fixtures.
2. Have your septic tank pumped every 3-5 years. You may also want to check and clean the distribution boxes at this time. Failure to have the septic tank pumped out regularly is the most frequent cause of premature damage to the leachfield. Make sure the septic tank has "sanitary tees" on the inlet and out sides.
3. Prevent rain gutters from draining onto the leachfield area.
4. Carefully control watering over the leachfield area. Do not plant vegetation over the leachfield that requires excessive amounts of water.
5. Disconnect any water softeners or adjust the water softener to backwash as little as possible. The high salt concentration of the discharge will clog soil pores and the leachfield is not sized for the extra wastewater load.
6. Fix any leaking plumbing fixtures and service fixtures routinely before leaks occur.
7. Do not plant trees on or near the 100% leachfield replacement area. They may have to be removed when a new leachfield needs to be installed.
8. Do not plant certain types of trees over your existing leachfield. Some types (willow, mulberry, cottonwood, etc.) will damage or block the leachlines.
9. Do not drive or park heavy vehicles, or place heavy objects, such as portable swimming pools over septic tanks or leachfields. These can damage the leachfield or septic tank.
10. Do not flush semi or non-biodegradable items into the septic tank, including paper towels, facial tissues, cigarettes, sanitary napkins, or coffee grounds. These add to the solids load on the septic system and can reduce the liquid capacity of the tank surprisingly fast.
11. Minimize or eliminate the use of garbage disposal units in the sink. This appliance adds extra solids and water to the septic system.
12. Collect grease and cooking oils in a container near the sink rather than pouring down the drain. Fats and oils solidify and may clog the soil pores.
13. Wash clothes/dishes only when you have a full load. Distribute the clothes washing throughout the week to avoid overloading the leachfield.
14. Do not let water run while shaving, Shampooing, brushing your teeth, etc. Conserving water whenever possible helps to maintain a septic system. Excessive amounts of water entering the septic system increases the load on the leachfield and reduces the soil's capacity to absorb water.