

# Care of Your Septic System



## Don'ts and Do's

**Don't** flush cigarette butts, tampons, condoms or other indigestible materials down the toilets or sinks. These will clog the outlet filter or drainfield.

**Don't** pour grease down the drain — grease **cannot** be digested by the septic system and will clog it! Instead, pour the grease into an empty can or bottle and discard with the trash.

**Don't** use excessive amounts of bleach or other cleaning products — too much will interfere with the bacterial action inside the septic tank. **Small amounts** of household bleach or laundry detergent can be used without ill effects.

**Don't** do several loads of laundry back-to-back — instead, **space your wash loads out over the week** so that the septic system does not have to process so much water (a typical wash load uses between **60 - 90** gallons per load!).

**Don't** plant trees or shrubbery near or over your drainfield. **Roots** from trees and plants will grow into the drainlines and clog them.

**Don't** allow vehicles to drive over **any** part of your septic system. Traffic over your drainfield can crush the pipes or pack down the soil around them, and driving over the septic tank can cause the tank's lid to crack or break apart!

**Do** conserve water — the less water you use, the less wastewater your septic system will have to process! Look into installing water-conserving showerheads, toilets or other water-saving features.

**Do** have your septic tank pumped out periodically. The Florida Department of Health recommends that septic tanks be pumped out **every four to five years** to reduce accumulations of sludge in the tank.

**Do check your plumbing for leaks** on a regular basis. A leaking toilet flapper valve can let hundreds of gallons of wasted water into your septic system, causing stoppages and overloaded drainfields.

**Do** consult your local health department for more information. Our Environmental Health Professionals can provide you with many tips and information to help your septic system last as long as possible.

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