Septic System DOs and DON’Ts
A quick reference guide to extend the life of your septic system

A properly constructed and maintained system can last a long time if you follow some common septic system DO’s and DON’Ts:

- **DO** conserve water and fix leaks quickly. Installing high efficiency appliances, such as washers and low-flow toilets, can extend the life of your system while leaky faucets can limit your system’s capacity.

- **DO** have your septic tank routinely serviced as specified by a licensed professional.

- **DO** regularly check the condition of your septic system and any access covers. Unsecured, or unsafe, lids may allow children or pets to fall into a septic tank, and can be fatal.

- **DO** try to keep your septic tank cover accessible for inspections and pumping. You may wish to install septic tank risers to avoid having to disturb your lawn for every maintenance event.

- **DO** keep records of repairs, pumping, inspections, permits issued, and other SSTS maintenance activities.

- **DO** identify the location of your septic tank and drainfield. A sketch or map allows easier navigation to septic system components.

- **DO** divert water sources such as roof drains, house footing drains, and sump pumps away from the septic system. These water sources should not be placed in or on top of your system. Excessive water can cause back-ups and premature system failure.

- **DO** call a licensed professional if you ever experience problems with your system, or if there are any signs of system failure.

- **DON’T** flush the following items:
  - Lint or clothing fibers
  - Diapers
  - Cigarette butts
  - Facial tissue
  - Condoms
  - Feminine hygiene products
  - Unused medications
  - Paint or solvents
  - Flammable material
  - Coffee grounds
  - Cat litter
  - Cooking oils and grease
  - “Flushable” wipes or paper towels

These items will shorten the life of your system and may cause issues such as component failure, or sewage backup into your yard or home. ONLY human waste and toilet paper should ever be flushed.

- **DON’T** drive over, or park anything on, the septic tank or drainfield. This can limit system life and cause damage.

- **DON’T** plant deep rooted plants over or near the drainfield. Roots from trees or shrubs may clog and damage drain lines.

- **DON’T** dig in, or build anything on top of your drainfield.

- **DON’T** make, or allow, repairs to your septic system without obtaining the required local permits and required professional assistance.

- **DON’T** enter your septic tank. Working in and around a septic tank is dangerous and gases generated in the tank could be fatal.