



SUTTER COUNTY

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Building Inspection
Code Enforcement

Engineering/Water Resources
Environmental Health

Planning
Road Maintenance

TIPS FOR SEPTIC SYSTEM CARE

1. Install water saving plumbing fixtures.
2. Pump septic tanks every 3 to 5 years. You may also want to check and clean distribution boxes at this time. Failure to have the septic tank pumped out regularly is the most frequent cause of premature damage to the leach field. Make sure septic tank has "sanitary tees" (especially on the outlet pipe).
3. Prevent rain gutters from draining onto leach field.
4. Carefully control watering over leach field. Do not plant vegetation over leach field which requires excessive amounts of watering.
5. Disconnect any water softeners or adjust water softeners to backwash as little as possible. The high salt concentrations of the discharge will clog soil pores and the leach field is not sized for the additional backwash gallonage.
6. Fix any leaking plumbing fixtures and service fixtures routinely before leaks occur.
7. Do not plant trees on or near the 100% leach field replacement area. They may have to be removed for future leach field replacement.
8. Do not plant trees on or near the leach field. Roots of certain tree types will damage or block the leach lines.
9. Do not drive or park heavy vehicles, or place heavy objects, such as portable swimming pools over septic tanks and leach fields. These can damage soil porosity and/or septic tanks.
10. Do not flush semi- or non-biodegradable items into septic tank, including paper towels, tissues, cigarettes, sanitary napkins, or coffee grounds. Disposal of these adds 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 grinders. This appliance adds extra solids and water to the septic system.
12. Collect grease in a container near the sink rather than pouring it down the drain. Fats and grease 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 leach field.
14. Do not let water run while shaving, shampooing, brushing teeth, etc. Conserving water whenever possible helps to maintain a septic system. Excessive amounts of water entering the septic system increases the wastewater load on the drainfield and reduces the soil's capacity to absorb wastewater.

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