



## Septic Systems DOs and DON'Ts

**DO** learn the location of your septic tank and soil treatment area. Keep a sketch of it handy with your maintenance record for service visits.

**DO** have your onsite wastewater treatment system inspected annually.

**DO** have your septic tank pumped out regularly by a licensed contractor.

**DO** keep your septic tank cover accessible for inspections and pumping. Install risers if necessary.

**DO** call a professional whenever you experience problems with your system or if there are any signs of system malfunction.

**DO** keep a detailed record of repairs, pumpings, inspections, permits issued and other maintenance activities.

**DO** conserve water to avoid overloading the system. Be sure to repair any leaky faucets or toilets.

**DO** divert other sources of water, like roof drains, house footing drains, and sump pumps, away from the onsite wastewater system. Excessive water keeps the soil in the soil treatment area from naturally cleansing the wastewater.

**DON'T** go down into a septic tank. Toxic gases are produced by the natural treatment processes in septic tanks and can kill in minutes. Extreme care should be taken when inspecting a septic tank, even when just looking in.

**DON'T** allow anyone to drive or park over any part of the system. The exception to this would be a driveway under which SCH 40 PVC pipe has been installed.

**DON'T** plant anything over or near the soil treatment area except grass. Roots from nearby trees may clog and damage the distribution lines.

**DON'T** dig in your soil treatment area or build anything over it, and don't cover the soil treatment area with a hard surface such as concrete or asphalt. The area over the soil treatment area should only have a grass cover. The grass will not only prevent erosion but will remove excess water.

**DON'T** add additional structures or make or allow repairs to your onsite wastewater treatment system without obtaining the required SOUTH PLAINS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT permit. **DO** use professional licensed septic contractors when necessary.

**DON'T** use septic tank additives. These products usually do not help and some may be harmful to your system.

**DON'T** use your toilet as a trash can, or poison your septic system and the groundwater by pouring harmful chemicals and cleansers down the drain. Harsh chemicals, such as clog removers, can kill the beneficial bacteria that treat your wastewater.

**DON'T** use a garbage disposal without checking with your local regulatory agency to make sure that your onsite wastewater treatment system can accommodate this additional waste.

**DO NOT FLUSH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DOWN THE DRAIN:**

COFFEE GRINDS

DENTAL FLOSS

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS

KITTY LITTER

SANITARY NAPKINS, TAMPONS, or OTHER FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

CIGARETTE BUTTS

CONDOMS

FATS, OIL or GREASE

PAPER TOWELS

PAINTS, VARNISHES, THINNERS, WASTE OILs

PHOTOGRAPHIC CHEMICALS

PESTICIDES

EXCESSIVE QUANTITIES OF HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS, DETERGENTS OR BLEACH