

# Maintaining Your Septic System

## Do

**Do** obtain necessary permits from Greene County Resource Management Department, (417/868-4015), or the appropriate local agency, before making any repairs.

**Do** use professional certified installers.

**Do** have your septic tank inspected annually.

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

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

**Do** conserve water to avoid overloading the system. Repair any leaky faucets or toilets.

**Do** divert other sources of water, like roof drains, house footing drains, and sump pumps away from the lateral field.

**Do** establish and maintain a good stand of grass over the lateral field.

**Do** have your well tested annually (contact your local health department).

## Don't

**Don't** go down into a septic tank.

**Don't** allow anyone to drive or park over any part of the system.

**Don't** plant anything over or near the lateral field except grass. Even roots from nearby trees or shrubs may clog and damage the drain lines.

**Don't** use your septic system as a trash can. Plastics, cat box litter, cigarette filters, condoms, tampons, sanitary napkins, paper towels and facial tissues should not be disposed of in your toilets. These items quickly fill your septic tank with solids, decrease its efficiency, and will require you to pump out the tank more frequently. They could also clog the sewer line to the septic tank, causing wastewater to back up into your home.

**Don't** dig in your lateral field or build anything over it, and don't cover the lateral field with a hard surface such as concrete or asphalt.

**Don't** pour into drains: septic tank additives, chemical drain openers, paint, varnishes, thinners, waste oil, photographic solutions, pesticides and other organic chemicals.

**Don't** allow backwash from your home water softener to enter the septic system.

## If you have problems

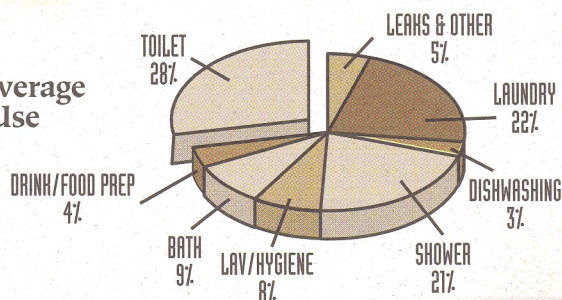
Even with the best maintenance some systems will eventually have problems. Call the Greene County Health Department 864-1658 or the Greene County Resource Management Department 868-4015 for advice on ways to address these problems.

One of the best things you can do for your septic system is to reduce the amount of water flowing into it. This is especially important if the soil on your lot does not readily absorb water.

A typical family of four uses 250-300 gallons of water every day. You can reduce this figure with simple conservation measures.

- Repair leaking faucets or running toilets.
- Use clothes and dish washers only when full.
- Reduce length of showers and lower water level in baths.
- Turn off unneeded water when washing hands and brushing teeth.
- Install water saver fittings in faucets and shower heads.
- Install a low-flush toilet or toilet dam.

## National Average Water Use



**Watershed Committee of the Ozarks**

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**Greene County Resource Management Department**

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