

Abridged Septic System User Notes (July 1997)

1. It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that a septic system's design complies with the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules, 10-144A CMR 241, as well as applicable local ordinances.
2. It is the homeowner's responsibility to obtain all required local, state and federal permits required for installing a septic system. Contact the Maine DEP @ 287-2111 and Army Corps of Engineers @ 623-8367 with questions.
3. Garbage grinders are not recommended with septic systems. The Subsurface Waste Water Disposal Rules require additional septic tank capacity, tanks in series, or a septic tank outlet filter if a grinder is used. The tank should be pumped more often.
4. Low volume toilets (max. 1.6 gal. per flush) and shower/faucet flow reducing fixtures will minimize water use, and should extend the life of the septic system.
5. Limit wastewater generation so that the septic system design capacity is not exceeded on any day. Exceeding design flow will saturate and plug the disposal field.
6. Connecting roof or floor drains to a septic system may cause premature failure.
7. Don't send backwash from water treatment devices to the septic system. This will prevent the associated high flow and harmful chemicals.
8. Don't use powdered soaps or detergents; their components plug disposal field soil pores.
9. It is illegal to dispose of hazardous or toxic substances (paints, pesticides, solvents, drain openers, etc.) in your septic system. They

can kill living organisms critical to your system, and pollute surface/ground waters. Use snakes, baking soda solutions.

10. Do not dispose of non-biodegradable materials (disposable diapers, cat litter, coffee grounds, cigarette filters, paper towels, etc.). Use National Sanitation Foundation recommended toilet paper, which breaks down quickly.
11. Don't dispose of fats or greases; wipe heavy grease off of dishes before washing.
12. Chemical septic tank additives are prohibited in Maine (yeast, horse manure, Rid-X), and may in fact cause plugging of the disposal field.
13. Pump the septic tank regularly to prevent premature failure of the disposal field: once after the first year of use, and then every 2-5 years based on the first inspection. Adjust the frequency to life style changes. Inspect the tank's internal baffles. Install a filter at the tank outlet if subject to great fluctuations in septic system usage.
14. Do not drive over, or store heavy materials on top of septic system components, unless it is designed for heavy loads.
15. Divert all surface water away from the septic tank, pump station and disposal field.
16. PLEASE – call the local Plumbing Inspector, or the Plumbing Program in the Maine State Division of Health Engineering (287-5672) for help with any questions!