

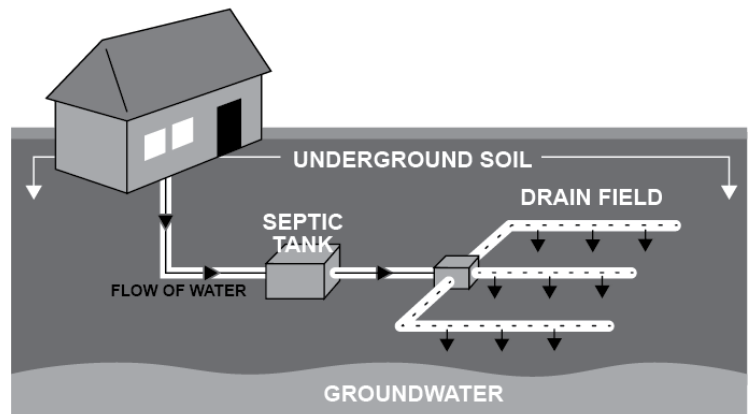
SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS AND FLOODING

Flooding can cause serious problems for homeowners that have a sewage treatment (septic) system. You can prepare for flooding around your home and do things after a flood that can prevent costly damage to your system.

Before a Flood

Keep your system in good working order at all times, which makes it better able to hold up when there is flooding. Before a flood, homeowners should follow these steps to decrease damage to their systems:

- Find and seal any places where flood water could get into the system, such as manhole and inspection ports.
- Turn off power to any electrical components at the circuit box before the area floods.
- **NEVER PUMP YOUR TANK BEFORE A FLOOD.** This could cause your tank to float out of the ground and damage your outlet and inlet pipes.



During a Flood

Flood water will increase the pressure on your system which can lead to sewage back up in your home. During a flood, homeowners should follow these steps to prevent sewage backup:

- Use the system as little as possible.
- Take sponge baths.
- Use disposable towelettes to clean hands.
- Do not use the dishwasher.
- Use disposable plates, cups and utensils (forks, spoons and knives).
- Do not do laundry at home. Take it to a Laundromat instead.
- If your home has a sump pump, make sure that it is not pumping run-off into the septic tank.
- If your home has a water softener, do not use it.
- Check for any leaks in plumbing that may cause extra water to go into your system.
- Re-route water from roof and gutters away from your drainfield.
- To prevent a back-up in your basement, follow these steps:
 - Remove all floor drain covers and use mechanical metal grip plugs to seal all drains in home (toilets, bathtubs, and showers). These can be found at any plumbing supply store.

After a Flood

Do not use your system until all flood waters have gone away and water in the soil absorption field is lower than the water level around your home. After the flood, these steps should be followed to get your system running properly again:

- Have your system professionally inspected and serviced if you think it has been damaged.
- If sewage backed-up into your home, clean and disinfect the area with a chlorine solution (1/2 cup chlorine to each gallon of water.)
- Have your system pumped, but **DO NOT PUMP IF DRAINFIELD IS FLOODED OR SATURATED.**
- Examine electrical components for damage before turning the power back on.

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