**SYSTEM INTRODUCTION**

Your septic system is called an engineered wastewater treatment system.  The system works by collecting the wastewater generated in the home into primary the befing system settling tank call septic tanks. The septic tanks complete primary treatment by allowing substances to sink or float in the tank where anaerobic digestion begins the primary treatment of the wastewater. The heavier substances referred as Sludge settles on the bottom of the tank and lighter substances like fats, oil and greases known a Scum float toward the to of the tank.  The zone between the Scum and Sludge layers is the effluent that is collected in the pump chamber for delivery to the mound system for final treatment a dispersal of the waste back into the environment.  The effluent pump is set to send light doses of wastewater throughout the day.  When the effluent reaches the raised bed of sand the second stage of treatment begins. The sand physically filters out pathogens and biological matter. Naturally occurring microorganisms from the soil and the human gut, use the filtered organic material in the sand as a food source.  The treated effluent at this point enters the natural soil where further biological and chemical processes complete the treatment of the wastewater and the water is released back into the surrounding water table for reuse in the local ecosystem.

The life span of a properly functioning septic system, which achieves the preferred treatment, depends, in part, on the education of the homeowner.  The following information is a recommended list of “Do’s and Don’ts” for the users of the community septic system.  Compliance with this list will help to insure minimal disturbances to the system and your lifestyle.

**Do’s**

* Do practice water conservation.  The system is designed to treat a specified volume of water per day.  Overloading the system will cause premature failure.
* Do be aware that a simple toilet float can hang up and result in over 2000 gallons per day of wasted water.  Normal household usage averages 60 gallons/day/person.  Use water saving devices in the toilet tank, and don’t flush unnecessarily.
* Do provide for a lint filter on the washing machine.  This item should be cleaned on a routine basis.

**Don’ts**

* Don’t flush trash or chemicals down drains or toilets.  Flushing flammable and toxic products is dangerous, while other materials such as paper towels, cigarettes, coffee grounds, egg shells, large amounts of hair and cooking grease can be harmful to the system.
* Don’t dump recreational vehicle waste down drains or toilets.  The system was designed for residential flows and cannot handle the extra solids and waste loads from recreational vehicles.  Recreational waste also contains toxic or other materials which may hamper the biological activity of the system.
* Don’t use garbage disposals excessively.  A sand filter mound system overloaded with organic material may plug up and quit working.  Compost scraps or dispose of with your trash.
* Don’t pour grease down the drain.  Collect in containers and dispose of in the trash.
* Don’t use special additives that are advertised to enhance the performance of septic tanks.  Additives do not improve the performance of the system and may, in fact, damage the system.  The natural microorganisms that grow in the septic tanks generate their own enzymes that are sufficient for breaking down and digesting nutrients in the wastewater.
* **Don’t discharge water softener backwash into the system.  In addition to the increased water volume, the backwash contains high levels of chlorides that can destroy microorganisms.**
* Don’t flush paints, floor wax or rug cleaner into the system.  These products will interfere with the normal operation of the septic tanks.
* Don’t flush pool or spa products into the system.  Limit the use of bath and body oils.  These products can overload the systems digestion capacity.
* Don’t use toilet tank sanitizer discs.  The high levels of chlorine can destroy the microorganisms.
* Don’t connect rain gutters or storm drains to the sewage lines leading from the individual homes to the lift station.  Increased flows will lead to premature failure of the system.
* Don’t connect floor drains or animal washing stations to the septic system. A separate handling system must be installed to handle dog waste and hair.

**Continuing Maintenance**

It is recommended that an experienced operation and maintenance provider check the following items at a minimum of a bi-annual interval.

* The tanks for need of pumping,
* Test the functionality of pumps, floats and controls,
* Clean all the filters in the septic tanks and pump chambers,
* Flush the distribution laterals and provide bottle brushing as needed.