

After going through all the steps to have your system designed, installed, and permitted, you'll want to take care of your investment. It is easy to have an "out of sight, out of mind" relationship with your septic system. But if you remember to care for it properly, it should last for many years! Consider the info below to be your bathroom reading for the next few days as you break in your new septic system.

What you can do right away...

Learn the septic system dos & don'ts

From day one, you can start practicing good habits that will help your system last a long time. Take a look at the lists below for the main "dos" and "don'ts" of septic systems.

Septic "Dos"

- Only put water, human waste, toilet paper, and soap down the drain
- Use sink strainers to prevent food from going down the drain
- Use concentrated detergents
- Use dryer sheets instead of liquid fabric softeners
- Conserve water when possible
- Spread out loads of laundry and dishes
- Fix any leaky fixtures
- Direct sprinklers and drains away from your drainfield
- Have your system inspected regularly and pumped when recommended
- Check your system for cracks, leaks, and damage
- Make sure your tank lids are secure
- Walk your drainfield often to check for signs of failure
- Contact a certified septic professional if you notice signs of a problem

Septic "Don'ts"

- Flush medications, paint, hazardous materials, diapers, paper towels, wipes, feminine hygiene products, condoms, pet waste, or pet litter
- Use a garbage disposal
- Do all the laundry & dishes in one day
- Use excess amounts of harsh chemicals or detergents
- Use septic system additives
- Use excessive amounts of toilet paper or soap
- Plant trees or vegetable gardens on or near your drainfield
- Park or drive cars and heavy equipment over your drainfield
- Allow livestock to roam over the drainfield
- Build structures on top of your drainfield
- Dig or rototill in your drainfield
- Put a fire pit on top of your drainfield

Mark your calendar

Washington State homeowners are required to have their septic systems inspected regularly. This is one of the most important things you can do to keep your system running smoothly. The type of system determines how often it must be inspected. Not sure how often yours should be inspected? Visit our maintenance webpage for details www.snohd.org/682/Maintaining-Your-Septic-System

Landscape your drainfield

Installers are required to backfill and cover your system after it's been approved, but they are not required to do any landscaping on top of the drainfield or other parts of your system. Some may offer this service and include it in their quote. If they do not, you'll want to plant grass (or another suitable groundcover) over your drainfield as soon as possible. Grass helps with oxygen exchange, keeps soil healthy, and holds dirt in place so your drainfield can do its job. For more info, visit our septic landscaping webpage at www.snohd.org/742/Septic-Landscaping

Keep your records

The Health Department has sent you a copy of the accepted as-built record which shows the exact location of septic system components on your property. Keep this for your records along with the signed permit. A copy of the as-built will also be uploaded to a database called OnlineRME. If you lose it, you can always access it through OnlineRME or contact the Health Department. In OnlineRME, you can also view other septic records such as service history reports and historical files. To access your online records and for a tutorial on how to use OnlineRME, visit www.snohd.org/159/As-Built-Records

When you have a bit more time...

Check out the resources below for even more information about septic system care and maintenance!

Septic Care Workshop: We recommend that homeowners with a new septic system take our Septic Care Workshop. This covers everything in detail and makes you eligible for our Savvy Septic Rebates. Take our free, online workshop anytime by visiting www.snohd.org/713/Septic-Care-Workshops. More info on rebates can be found at www.snohd.org/714/Rebates. If you can't take the workshop online, contact the Savvy Septic program at (425) 388-3636 for workshop alternatives.

Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems: You can view and print a comprehensive guide for homeowners with septic systems by visiting www.snohd.org/DocumentCenter/View/12363

Septic Maintenance Webpages: Browse our webpages covering maintenance info with links to additional educational resources by visiting www.snohd.org/165/Septic-Maintenance-Repair

Questions?

Contact us! Email SHD-EHQ@snoco.org or call (425) 339-5250 for technical assistance.