

If you take care of your septic system, you will save yourself time, money and worry. Failed systems can be hazardous to the environment and your pocketbook. It can degrade water supplies and reduce your property value. Here are some valuable tips to ensure the longevity of your system:

- ▶ **Do** familiarize yourself with the location of your septic system and, if it has one, the electrical control panel.
- ▶ **Do** divert surface water away from your leaching bed.
- ▶ **Do** pump out your septic tank on a regular basis (3–5 years).
- ▶ **Do** repair leaky plumbing fixtures.
- ▶ **Do** conserve water to reduce the amount of wastewater that must be treated.
- ▶ **Do** replace old toilets with a low-flush model.
- ▶ **Do** keep lint out of your septic system by cleaning the lint filters on your washing machine.
- ▶ **Do** keep the tank access lid secure to the riser at all times.
- ▶ **Do** keep an “as built” system diagram along with records of septic system maintenance and service calls in a safe place for reference.
- ▶ **Do** consider how changing the use of your home or building will impact the septic system.
- ▶ **Don't** flush hazardous chemicals, cigarette butts, sanitary products or pharmaceuticals.
- ▶ **Don't** use a garbage disposal/garburator.
- ▶ **Don't** plant trees or shrubs too close to the septic system or leaching bed.
- ▶ **Don't** use special additives that are touted to enhance the performance of your tank or system.
- ▶ **Don't** leave interior faucets on to protect water lines during cold spells. Instead, properly insulate or heat your faucets and plumbing.
- ▶ **Don't** dig without knowing the location of your septic system.
- ▶ **Don't** drive over your septic tank or any buried components in your sewage system.
- ▶ **Don't** connect rain gutters, storm drains or allow surface water to drain into a sewage system.
- ▶ **Don't** discharge water softener backwash to the septic system unless your system has been designed for it.
- ▶ **Don't** enter a tank. Gases and lack of oxygen can be fatal.

Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association

Established in 1999, the Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association (OOWA) is dedicated to providing access to a large network of onsite wastewater professionals.

OOWA members include:

- ▶ Septic Installers
- ▶ Septic Inspectors/Regulators
- ▶ Engineers
- ▶ Designers
- ▶ Manufacturers
- ▶ Septic Pumpers
- ▶ Researchers/Academics

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All new septic tanks have filters installed and should be inspected and cleaned out on a yearly basis. It can be beneficial to have filters installed on an older system.



Install risers to provide easy access to your septic tank.

Images courtesy Polylok

Courtesy of your local OOWA Member: