



# County of Yolo

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### Environmental Health

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### MAINTENANCE OF SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Proper maintenance can prevent failure and costly repairs to your septic system. Observe these operational and maintenance tips:

1. Keep an accurate record on the location of your septic tank and leach field.
2. Practice water conservation measures, install low flow fixtures, and repair leaking fixtures to minimize the generation of wastewater.
3. Avoid disposing of excessive grease, food scraps, nonbiodegradable material and similar clogging matter into your septic system.
4. Do not dispose of hazardous chemicals, including automobile antifreeze, petroleum products and pesticides into the system. Detection of hazardous chemical in your septic system can result in COSTLY fines and corrections.
5. To prevent soil erosion damage, promptly establish vegetative groundcovers or perennial grasses over the leach field.
6. When landscaping over the septic system:
  - Avoid using invasive rooting plants near the septic tank or distribution lines. Such plants can clog lines.
  - Design irrigation systems and drainage patterns so that saturation conditions over the septic tank or leach field will not occur.
  - Minimize final soil cover to 1 to 1 ½ feet thick over the leach field gravel. This allows optimum biological treatment of the sewage.
7. Keep heavy vehicles and large animals off the leach field.
8. Routinely pump out the solids and sludge of your septic tank. Generally, this should be done once every three years and only a Yolo County registered septage hauler. Be sure to keep a record of all pumping

*Never allow anyone to go down into a septic tank!* Toxic gases that build up in the septic tank can kill in minutes.

If there are any questions regarding the operation and maintenance of your septic system, contact the Environmental Health office by phone at (530) 66-8646 or email at [environmental.health@yolocounty.org](mailto:environmental.health@yolocounty.org)

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