



## *Septic Tank Do's and Don'ts for Homeowners*

Do:

- ✓ Ensure proper installation by contractors and certified installers who are experienced with plastic septic tank systems.
- ✓ If performing DIY installation, review, understand, and adhere to all installation guidelines in VPC Global's Best Practices Septic Tank Installation instructions available on our website; verify DIY installation is permitted in your location and follow all legal requirements and procedures.
- ✓ Contact us with any questions regarding septic tank installation or site preparation.
- ✓ Only use our septic tanks for underground septic tank systems.
- ✓ Keep a record of septic tank serial number should it be needed for warranty claims.
- ✓ Purchase and include manway risers to bring septic tank access up to ground level for easy maintenance.
- ✓ Consider installing an effluent filter in the septic tank, if not required, to help prevent solids from entering the drain field.
- ✓ Learn the basics of how the system works and its parts.
- ✓ Educate your household, make sure all know what should and should not go down the drains.
- ✓ Know the location and size of your septic tank as this can help with future maintenance, repairs, or upgrades.
- ✓ Keep accurate records of inspections, pumping, and any other maintenance activities including the installation date of your tank.
- ✓ Have tank maintenance performed regularly to ensure system performance and prevent potential problems.
- ✓ Have a professional inspect every 1-2 years and pump your septic tank every 3-5 years depending on household size and usage.
- ✓ Conserve water to reduce the amount of wastewater that must be received and treated by the septic tank system.
- ✓ Consider using and upgrading to water efficient fixtures and appliances such as low-flow toilets, showerheads, and faucet aerators to reduce water usage and the burden on your septic system.
- ✓ Monitor water use and stagger water using appliances and fixtures across a time period rather than all at once.
- ✓ Distribute laundry loads throughout the week instead of doing it all in one day to reduce water overflow and the risk of overloading your septic system.
- ✓ Fix leaks promptly to prevent overloading the system; a simple leaking faucet can contribute hundreds of gallons of water within a 1-2 day period.
- ✓ Use chemicals carefully and be mindful of the household chemicals that you pour down the drains.
- ✓ Direct rainwater runoff away from the septic tank and drainfield.
- ✓ Pay attention to any changes in drain fixtures and signs of system failure, such as slow drains, sewage backups, gurgling toilets when flushing, and interior sewage odors.
- ✓ Promptly respond to any warning signs and maintenance needs.



## Don't:

- ☒ Use septic tanks for unauthorized applications.
- ☒ Add substantial and/or consistent volumes of liquids above 120°F.
- ☒ Exceed the recommended daily wastewater flow rates into the tank.
- ☒ Overlook the importance of understanding the requirements of owning and using a septic tank.
- ☒ Neglect proper waste disposal practices which can cause long term issues or problems over time.
- ☒ Flush anything other than human waste down the toilet as the foreign material can clog or damage your system.
- ☒ Flush plastics, cigarette butts, diapers, paper towels, or other non-biodegradable items; flushable wipes are also not recommended for septic tanks.
- ☒ Dispose of hazardous chemicals, such as household cleaners, paints, or motor oils, by flushing them down drains or toilets as it can destroy the working bacteria in the septic tank and contaminate groundwater.
- ☒ Skip regular inspections and maintenance that can lead to blockages, overflows, and system failures, which are costly to repair.
- ☒ Attempt DIY repair or maintenance on a septic tank or system as doing so without proper knowledge or tools can lead to further damage or a hazardous scenario; always consult a professional.
- ☒ Ignore warning signs of system failure, such as slow draining fixtures, gurgling sounds from pipes, or foul odors in and around the home as these could be indications of a clogged or failing system.
- ☒ Ignore sewage backflow into the property, especially at different fixtures such as the bath or shower, as this indicates the tank is full or clogged and needs immediate attention.
- ☒ Use the garbage disposal excessively as this can introduce too much solid waste into the septic tank.
- ☒ Pour fats, oils, or grease down the drain as they can solidify and cause blockages in the system and are not broken down very well by the system bacteria.
- ☒ Drive or park vehicles or heavy equipment on the drain field as this can damage the tank or components.
- ☒ Plant deep-rooted trees or shrubs near the septic tank or drain field as the roots can grow into and block or damage the pipes.
- ☒ Connect rainwater drains to the septic sewer system as the excess water can overload the system.
- ☒ Cover access lids with permanent structures such as decks, patios, and sheds; the tank must be accessible for maintenance.