

## **Septic System for Rancho Bonitos**

### **Homeowners and Unit Renters**

Maintenance of septic systems is often forgotten because they are underground (out of sight and out of mind). The following important information provides some good practices and some practices to limit, avoid or eliminate.

#### **PRACTICES THAT AFFECT SEPTIC SYSTEM FUNCTION**

Be aware of products and practices that can damage or reduce the effectiveness of the septic system...

**Minimize garbage disposal (garburator) use** – this will reduce the amount of solids going to the septic tank. Households with garbage disposal units produce more solids than those without such units. Try to dispose of kitchen waste into the garbage bins.

**Avoid pouring cooking oils, grease or fat (lard, beef tallow, butter, cheese, cream) into the tank.** Use paper towels to remove excess cooking oils and food scraps from pans, before washing dishes. The scum layer on top of the wastewater in the septic tank is primarily made up of toilet paper, oils, fats, and grease from the kitchen. When cooking oils, fats and grease are poured down the kitchen sink drain, they become part of the scum layer. They can accumulate until they clog the tank. When homeowners use hot water to flush grease or fat down the drain, it may pass on through the tank directly into the drain field lines where it can rapidly clog the drain lines. Even though these products are organic in nature, they decompose so slowly by microbes that further wastewater loading from the tank only speeds up clogging.

**Check toilet for leaks.** A slow flushing toilet or slow draining sink can be a sign that your septic system is failing. Check toilets at least once a year by putting a few drops of food colouring into the tank. Without flushing, see if the colouring enters the bowl. This indicates a leak.

**Choose TOILET TISSUE that is safe for septic systems.** Please read the label and choose products that are labelled to be safe for septic tanks. Choose white, septic tank friendly toilet paper without added colour. **WET WIPES** (even those that claim to be flushable) should not be flushed. Throw them in the trash.

**Limit water entering your tank...** use water saving faucets, showers and toilets.

**Spread out clothes washing and avoid washing large loads if you can.**

**USE ONLY LIQUID DETERGENT** when washing clothes. Use bleach sparingly. Large dumps of water into the system can cause the soil to saturate. Even clean water cannot be accepted if the soil is saturated and untreated wastewater will either rise to the surface or back up. Try to wash medium loads frequently, rather than several large loads of laundry in the same day.

**Avoid using hand soap that is antibacterial.** This product kills helpful bacteria in our septic system. As an alternative - wash hands with regular soap and then apply hand sanitizer product.

**Never place pesticides, paint thinners, solvents, drain cleaners, poisons or other harsh household chemicals into the septic system.**

These products kill the microbes in the tank. The microbes are needed to decompose solids and purify the wastewater. Without the microbes, the system is overtaxed and the biological action is destroyed within our system. This clogs our drain field. The approved drain cleaner is Green Gobbler.

### **DO NOT FLUSH OR WASH DOWN THE DRAIN...**

Please throw all of the following items into the trash:

COFFEE GROUNDS

KITTY LITTER

DENTAL FLOSS

FAT/ GREASE/ OIL

PAPER TOWEL

CIGARETTE BUTTS

CONDOMS

SANITARY NAPKINS

TAMPONS

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS

KLEENEX

WET WIPES (even those that claim to be flushable - do not flush)

### **DO NOT FLUSH OR WASH DOWN THE DRAIN... Hazardous chemicals such as...**

**PAINTS**

**PAINT THINNERS**

**VARNISHES**

**PESTICIDES**

**ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP**

**OTHER CHEMICALS**

**PHOTOGRAPHIC SOLUTIONS**

**R.V. ANTIFREEZE**

**DRAIN CLEANERS**

**GASOLINE**

Please label these items and leave them for pick up beside the bins in the garbage/recycle area.

**When closing your unit at the end of the season, you may add to your sink drains**

**and toilet, a product called STOR-SAFE.** Adding this liquid will keep seals on toilets and sink drains lubricated. This product is approved by the contractor that checks our septic system. It is available in Yuma from: RV Connection, 4475 E 32nd St, (480-288-1111) Costs about \$7. Follow directions on the bottle.

**RV Owners:** When dumping your solids do not wait until your tank is full. Dump it quite often to help with septic tank management.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact, George Mader (Site 79) or Ray Horth (Site 98)