



## Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

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Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

### September 16<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> is Septic Smart Week

If you have an on-site septic system for your home or business, you are lucky as you have your very own personal wastewater treatment plant! September 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> is Septic Smart Week, and Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) would like to remind septic system owners to be *SepticSmart!* Follow these tips to keep your septic system working properly!

- **Think at the Sink!** What goes down your drain has a big impact on your septic system. Avoid harsh chemicals and use any cleaners, detergents, and especially drain cleaners in moderation.
- **Don't Strain your Drain!** Use water efficiently and stagger use of your washing machine to avoid overloading your system causing a back-up into your house. It is better to do one small load a day than save everything to wash all at once.
- **Shield your Field!** Tree and shrub roots, cars, and livestock can damage your drainfield. Don't plant woody trees and shrubs near your septic system and never drive a vehicle over any portion of it.
- **Protect It and Inspect It!** Regular septic system maintenance can save homeowners thousands of dollars in replacement costs and protect public health by identifying potential problems before they become irreversible. Have your system evaluated by a professional.
- **Don't Overload the Commode!** Don't treat your toilet like a trash can. Disposable diapers and wipes (even those labeled "flushable" or "septic system safe"), feminine hygiene products, cigarette butts, cat litter, and much more can damage your septic system if you flush them down the toilet. Only flush human waste and toilet paper, everything else should go in the trash.
- **Pump Your Tank!** Have your septic tank cleaned out at regular intervals by a licensed septage hauler. This should be done once every five years or so, depending on use and the size of your septic tank.

Septic system owners also should take special care during flood conditions. BEDHD recently added information on our website about septic system safety during a flood. This information can be accessed at <https://www.barryeatonhealth.org/site-flooded-sewage-systems-and-water-supply-wells>.

For more information on septic systems and how to be SepticSmart, visit <https://www.epa.gov/septic/septic-smart-homeowners>.