

# SEPTIC SYSTEM CARE & MAINTENANCE

## Protecting Your Investment



### The Importance of Septic System Maintenance

#### Saves Money

- Systems that are not properly maintained can cost \$2000-\$5000\* to replace.

#### Protects Home Value

- Malfunctioning systems can reduce property value, delay home sales or even pose a legal liability.

#### Protects Drinking Water & Groundwater

- A system that is properly maintained helps protect the drinking water quality in your neighborhood, and reduces the risk of contaminating local or regional waters (lakes, rivers, etc.)

\*Average cost is not guaranteed by Kalamazoo County.

### Signs of a Failing or Failed System

- Waste water backing up into the house.
- Gurgling/bubbling from toilets, sinks or drains.
- Bright green, spongy or wet grass around septic components.
- Pooling water or muddy soil around septic components.
- Strong foul odor around septic system area.

#### For additional information:

Visit [www.epa.gov/septicSMART](http://www.epa.gov/septicSMART), [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq), call Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Unit at (269) 373-5337 or contact your septic service professional.



Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services—HCS



### To Flush or Not to Flush: Toilets are NOT Trash Cans

There are many items that cannot be put into your septic system. Below is a list (not all inclusive).

- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Condoms
- Dental Floss
- Diapers
- Cotton Swabs
- Cigarette Butts
- Cat Litter
- Pharmaceuticals
- Household cleaners, chemicals, paints or oils.\*
- Food
- Paper Towels
- Cosmetics

\* For disposal of chemicals, refer to the manufacturer's label.



### Maintenance Tips

The average indoor water use is 70 gallons per individual, per day. Leaking/running toilets or fixtures can waste as much as 200 gallons per day.

- Perform regular pumping every 3-5 years.\*
- Inspect and repair leaking toilets and faucets.
- Route water softener discharge away from septic systems.\*
- Spread out laundry loads over the course of the day.
- Install efficiency shower heads and ENERGY STAR appliances.
- Practice water conservation.
- Turn alternator valve once a year.\*\*
- **DO NOT** Overuse garbage disposals. (Limit or eliminate use.)
- **DO NOT** Plant trees or bushes near or over the drain field.
- **DO NOT** Run roof drains, pool or hot tub discharge or any other excessive water run-off near or into the septic system.
- **DO NOT** Use chemical drain cleaner/openers.
- **DO NOT** Park or drive on any of your septic components.
- **DO NOT** Build structures or fences in or on the sewage treatment system or septic tank.

\* Share your pump cards with our office to keep the most up to date records in your file.

\*\*Ask your septic service professional for additional details/instructions.

