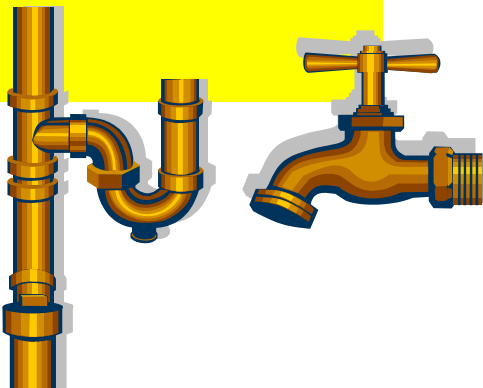


Conserve Water

Check toilets for leaks; Don't use toilet for ash tray or wastebasket;

Take shorter showers (5 minutes maximum); Install water-saving, low-flow shower heads; Turn off tap while brushing teeth or shaving.



The Central Sierra Watershed Committee (CSWC) has developed common ground solutions/agreements for improving watershed and local habitat. Through the monthly meetings the CSWC members have learned to air their differences while working together to provide solutions to watershed issues. The CSWC provides a public forum for all of the participating members to resolve issues; share knowledge; provide innovative solutions with each other and learn long-term watershed effort for three counties, involving more than 50 public, tribal, and private representatives participating in a consensus building effort. The mission of the CSWC is to promote the quality, quantity, and aesthetic values of our water resources through the conservation and restoration of our watersheds.



**CHOWCHILLA RED
TOP RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**



Business Address
Post Office Box 531
Chowchilla, CA 93610
Chowchilla/Fresno River Watershed

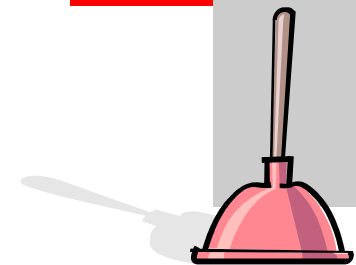
Phone: 559-642-3263
Fax: 559-658-7170
E-mail: info@cfwatershed.com

This watershed project is being funded with a grant from the CA Department of Conservation (DOC). The statements within this brochure are informative only and are not necessarily those of the DOC or its employees.

**CHOWCHILLA RED TOP RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Septic Systems

What you don't know
can hurt you!!!



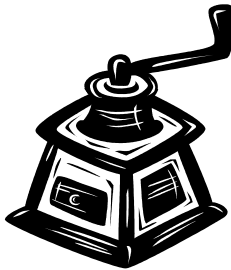
Most homeowners probably never give much thought to what goes down their drain. But if you rely on a septic system to treat and dispose of your household wastewater, what you don't know can hurt you, your property, and your surrounding environment.

Tips to know

Issue

Failing Septic Systems may:

- Result in the release of raw sewage into the environment, which can affect water quality within surrounding water bodies and impact drinking water supplies in nearby water wells
- Result in expensive repairs
- Harm property values throughout your neighborhood.
- Surface sewage may expose your family and pets to disease-causing bacteria and viruses.



TREATMENT

- Never dispose of paints, varnishes, thinners, waste oils, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals in your septic system.
- Avoid disposal of coffee grinds, diapers, kitty litter, sanitary napkins, grease, paper towels and other household items in your septic system.
- Fix leaky faucets and running toilets, and use washing machines and dishwashers only when full. This will prevent saturation of the soil in the drainfield, which can affect the quality of the soil and its ability to naturally remove toxins, bacteria, viruses, and other pollutants from the wastewater.
- Annually inspect your septic system to ensure that it is 1) working properly and 2) to determine when the tank should be pumped. If your septic system utilizes a dual disposal field, it is recommended that you switch leach lines when the clocks change.

- Pumping your tank depends on the tank size, number of people living in your home, and habits of your particular household. The general recommendation is between 3 to 5 years.
- Maintain and repair your septic system if defective, leaking or experiencing problems. Contact your Environmental Health Department prior to beginning repair or replacement work.

System Malfunctions

A system malfunction is associated with improper maintenance or operation. These problems can be fixed to bring the septic system back into compliance. With proper care, oversight, repairs, and occasional upgrades the system should work for decades to protect the public health and the environment. Malfunctioning systems were initially properly designed and installed to match the soil and other conditions on the home lot. Some reasons for a malfunction are:

- a household water leak or excess water use that overloads the system.
- changes in landscaping that paves over, crushes, or damages a portion of the system.
- changes in position of downspouts, rain gutters, and paved areas that drain excess water into the area of the yard with the septic system.
- Failure to pump the septic tank to remove excess sludge & scum

Recommendations

Avoid commercial septic tank cleaners and additives. According to the National Small Flows Clearinghouse "There are many products on the market that claim to help septic systems work better; the truth is there is no magic potion, in fact most engineers and sanitation professionals believe that commercial septic system additives are, at best, useless, and at worst, potentially harmful to a system."