



PLEASE HELP US PROTECT OUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

The City of Trinidad: The City of Trinidad and the surrounding areas use septic systems as the only means of wastewater disposal; there is no central sewer system. Trinidad has very small lots and dense development for the use of septic systems, and many of them in the City are older systems. There has been bacterial contamination documented in the waters around Trinidad. Therefore, the City has adopted a regulatory program to manage septic systems and protect public health and the environment. Vacation rentals have to meet certain standards under these rules.

Minimize the amount of solid material that goes into the septic system. Septic systems are designed to handle human waste and toilet paper. Other material can harm them.

- **Don't** put food waste down the drain. If there is a garbage disposal, avoid using it as much as possible. Food preparation debris dramatically add to the solids entering the system
- **Don't** let cooking oils and grease down the drain; thrown out with the trash. Once they enter the septic system they tend to harden and will eventually clog drain pipes and increase the need for tank cleaning.
- **Don't** flush non-bio-digradable items such as: cigarette butts, diapers, feminine napkins and tampons, paper towels and tissues.

Reduce water usage. The septic system is designed to handle a maximum amount of effluent per day. Doing several loads of laundry or having large numbers of people at the house could negatively affect the proper function of the system. Large flow inputs in a short period of time result in "stirring" of the septic system and discharge of high strength waste to the leachfield area.

- **Do** avoid long showers and full baths.
- **Do** avoid doing more than two loads of laundry in a day.

Limit chemical usage: The septic system contains beneficial bacteria that help process and dissolve solid waste. Various types of chemicals and detergents can negatively impact septic systems.

- **Don't** use strong cleaners.
- Avoid antibacterial soaps; they kill the beneficial bacteria in the septic system.
- Bleach and other household cleaners should be used sparingly.
- **Avoid** flushing prescription drugs down the drain.

Avoid parking on the septic system. The soil above the leachfield must remain able to breath in order for microbial treatment to occur, so any activity that compacts the soil or restricts air flow puts the system at risk. The septic tank itself can also be crushed by vehicular traffic.

- **Don't** park outside of designated spaces.