

Do Your Part. Be SepticSmart!

(NAPSA)—More than one in five households in the United States depend on septic systems to treat their wastewater. These small systems protect public health, preserve water resources, and maintain economic vitality in a community.

During Septic Smart Week, September 19–23, 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and local governments across the country are reminding homeowners of the importance of maintaining their septic systems.

The proper care and maintenance of septic systems can help homeowners avoid system backups, which can lead to costly repairs and failures. Having your septic system inspected by a septic service professional is the best way to detect if your system has a leak or backup and is due for repair.

To keep septic systems in proper working condition, homeowners can follow these SepticSmart “Top 10 Ways to Be a Good Septic Owner.”

1. Have your system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to your state or local health department recommendations.

2. Have your septic tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years.

3. Avoid pouring harsh products (e.g., oils, grease, chemicals, paint, medications) down the drain.

4. Discard nondegradable products (e.g., floss, disposable wipes, cat litter) in the trash instead of flushing them.

5. Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank.

6. Follow the system manufacturer’s directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives.

7. Repair leaks and use water-efficient WaterSense labeled fix-



Be SepticSmart: Get your system inspected.

tures and ENERGY STAR certified appliances to avoid overloading the system (and to save water, energy and money).

8. Maintain plants and vegetation near the system to ensure roots do not block drains.

9. Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low in or free of phosphates.

10. Prevent system freezing during cold weather by inspecting and insulating vulnerable systems parts such as the inspection pipe and soil treatment area.

In addition to the money you can potentially save by properly maintaining your system, you can also protect the health of your family and neighbors. Household wastewater can contain disease-causing bacteria, viruses and toxic chemicals. Leaking, overloaded, or failing systems can cause poorly treated sewage to seep in your yard or groundwater. It can also pollute lakes, rivers, and streams, which can affect the health of animals and people. When your system functions properly, it protects you, those around you, and your environment.

For more tips and useful information on how to be SepticSmart, visit www.epa.gov/septicmart.