

# Does Fecal Matter?

Yes, it matters. To your health, to your family, to your home, to our water, and to the community.

Everyone downstream depends on clean, reliable water. Unmaintained septic systems can be disastrous when bacteria and other toxic items leach out through a poorly running system into our groundwater and streams.

## Don't

**Don't** put dental floss, feminine hygiene products, condoms, diapers, cotton swabs, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, cat litter, paper towels, latex paint, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals into your system.

**Don't** use caustic drain openers for a clogged drain. Instead, use boiling water or a drain snake to open clogs.

**Don't** allow vehicle or livestock traffic on your septic system. Doing so can compact the soil or damage the pipes, tank, or other septic system components.

**Don't** plant anything over or near the drain field except grass. Roots from nearby trees or shrubs may clog and damage drain lines.

**Don't** dig in your drain field or build anything over it, and don't cover the drain field with hard surfaces, such as concrete or asphalt.

**Don't** make or allow repairs to your septic system without obtaining the required permit. Use professionally licensed septic contractors when needed.

Visit our website for more information:

[www.SepticSmart.org](http://www.SepticSmart.org).



Boulder County Public Health  
3450 Broadway  
Boulder, CO 80304

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Yes, it matters. To your health, to your family, to your home, to our water, and to the community.

Maintaining a healthy, functioning septic system keeps your home and family safe from contaminated water and E. coli bacteria. Make sure to keep your system maintained and approved.

**Do**

- Do** conserve water to avoid overloading the system.
- Do** have your system pumped regularly (every 2-4 years depending on use).
- Do** use substitutes for hazardous household chemicals.
- Do** learn the location of your septic tank and drain field. Keep a sketch of it handy with your maintenance record for service visits.
- Do** cover the drain field with a native grass cover to prevent erosion and remove excess water.
- Do** keep your septic tank cover accessible for inspections and pumpings. Install risers if necessary.
- Do** keep a detailed record of repairs, pumpings, inspections, permits issued, and other maintenance activities.
- Do** get your septic system permitted and approved by Boulder County Public Health.

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