

Septic System Recovery

Septic tanks contain waste, and people can get sick from being exposed to the sewage found in septic tanks and flood waters. Heavy rainfall can make septic systems function improperly. After such an event, it may take several days for your system to return to normal. Pumping the tank immediately may not help. Conserve household water to prevent backups of sewage in your home.

CONSERVING WATER

Septic systems with a pump need electricity. Without it, sewage can back up into your home. Conserve water from your tap until power is restored. Do not continue to use water if sewage backs up into the house, or if water or sewage is observed surfacing near the septic system. Keep children out of wet areas affected by sewage.

KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

When power to the system is restored, repairs may be necessary prior to returning to normal water use. The services of an electrician may also be needed if the sewage system's electrical units were flooded or had any physical damage.

SIGNS OF DAMAGE

Most septic tanks are not damaged by a flood since they are below ground and completely covered. However, septic tanks or pump chambers can become filled with debris. Signs of damage include settling or inability to accept water. If you suspect your septic tank has been damaged, call a professional to inspect, service, and clean it.

AFTER THE STORM

Removal of debris may damage a septic system. Vehicles can crush drain fields, tanks and distribution boxes, especially when the soil is saturated. Make sure no one drives in or around your septic tank and drain field and allow stumps to rot in place or have the stumps ground with a small stump grinder.

Remove and discard household goods contaminated with sewage that cannot be disinfected, such as rugs, wall coverings and drywall. Always wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves when cleaning up sewage.