Healthy septic systems are good for your family, your wallet, and the environment. With just a few simple steps, you can protect your septic—and avoid costly repairs. Your groundwater and Puget Sound lakes, rivers, and beaches benefit, too!

Outside

• Don’t empty hot tubs or pools into your septic system or onto the drainfield.
• Direct water from downspouts away from the drainfield.
• Watch where runoff from driveways and patios goes. Direct runoff away from the drainfield.
• Be careful landscaping and building around the drainfield. See our brochure—How to Plant and Build Around Your Drainfield—for more information. Find the brochure at tpchd.org/septic.

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Caring for Your Septic
Simple steps to protect your home

Have questions? Contact us!
(253) 649-1925
EHSSepticSystems@tpchd.org
tpchd.org/septic
3629 S. D St., MS 1035
Tacoma, WA 98418

Additional resources:
3D Septic System Models
tpchd.org/SepticCare
SepticSmart Homeowners—Environmental Protection Agency
epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-homeowners

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Inside

**Laundry room**
- Space your laundry throughout the week. Laundry adds a lot of water to your septic system. Several loads of laundry back-to-back can overload your septic system.
- Select the appropriate load-size on your washer if it has this feature. If not, only do full loads of laundry.
- Use a high-efficiency washing machine if possible.

**Bathroom**
- Fix any leaks immediately. A leaky fixture can add hundreds of gallons of water to your septic system every day.
- Only flush toilet paper and human waste down the toilet. Anything else should go in the trash.
- Use water-saving devices like low-flow toilets and shower heads.

**Kitchen**
- Don't use a garbage disposal. They add solids to your septic system. These can plug the drainfield or cause your tank to need frequent pumping.
- Use a drain trap to stop food going down the drain.
- Don't put grease or oils down the drain.

**General advice**
- Don't put household chemicals into your septic system. This includes oil-based paints, solvents, toxic cleaners, and latex paint waste. These can kill the bacteria in your septic system.
- Don't use chemicals to unclog drains. Use boiling water or a drain snake.
- Don't use septic tank additives. They aren't necessary and don't reduce the need for regular maintenance.