

COMMON CAUSES OF DRAINFIELD FAILURE AND OTHER PROBLEMS

Lack of pumping is the most common cause of failure. The sludge from the tank seals off the drainfield.

Using more water than what the system was designed for. This can be checked by taking the gallons used in the winter months and averaging, then dividing by 30 days to get gallons per day. A 3-bedroom home should use no more than 375 gallons per day.

A running commode or faucet, even if only for a few weeks. This can keep the sludge stirred up enough to discharge it into the drainfield.

Disposing of wipes into the septic tank. This practice is guaranteed to cause problems with the filter and is absolutely discouraged.

Using heavy detergents, detergents with fillers, or excessive amounts of detergent with each wash load. Liquid, concentrated, biodegradable detergents are best. We recommend liquid **PUREX**.

Doing all the laundry in one day, can stir up to the solids in the tank and causing them to discharge into the drainfield.

Studies have found the lint from synthetic clothing in wash water does not degrade and can contribute to sealing off the pores in the drainfield. These studies show that lint from one household's laundry for one year is enough to carpet an entire house.

Discharging a jacuzzi or whirlpool tub tends to stir up the solids and discharge them into the drainfield.

The air conditioner overflow draining into the tank. It could be constantly running undetected.

Using the garbage disposal excessively. We recommend disposing of food residue only.

Putting grease down the drain. This is very detrimental to the drainfield.

Flood irrigating over tank and drainfield. The silt from the field tends to get into the drainfield and seal it off. Also gophers create havoc by digging around drainfield so that irrigation water gets into it.

Gas utility or other utility cutting off a drainfield lateral when it was installed.

Extensive tree roots such as willow, mulberry, etc. These seal off the drainfield.

Poor soil for drainage. This could be heavy soil that's not porous and does not drain well, or soil with little organic matter. The latter soil type doesn't have the microorganisms needed to consume the particles discharged into the drainfield, therefore allowing the drainfield to be sealed off.

Heavy use of antibiotics over a period of time or constant use of anti-bacterial products can completely kill off the productive drainfield bacteria.

Be aware that reverse osmosis water filters use 3 - 5 gallons per every 1-gallon of water produced. Water softeners also produce excess water and salt. We recommend discharging separately.

Disposing of paint or washing paint pans and brushes in the household can kill a drainfield.

Excessive use of bath oils has been found to seal off a drainfield.

Flushing flushable cat litter down the commode can seal off a drainfield.

Adding enzymes or other additives advertised for septic tanks. This can cause sludge to float out into the drainfield causing early drainfield failure.

Use of toilet deodorizers that deodorize with every flush. These can kill off valuable bacteria.

With proper care a drainfield could last 30 years or more. If you have questions, feel free to call us!

