

## Effects on Water Quality

### *Drinking Water*

Fresh, clean groundwater is a very important resource, particularly if you own a rural home. If your septic system, or a neighboring system is failing, you may be unwittingly discharging household waste into a surface or ground water supply. Bacteria that has entered a groundwater supply is cause for concern in regard to the quality of your drinking water. Bacteria can also be very difficult to remove and may cause physical illness before a problem is detected.

### *Surface Water*

The ability to swim, fish or boat on any of our local lakes and rivers is a large part of what makes rural living so desirable. However, no one wants to recreate in water that has been influenced with septic system discharge. Exposure to many types of bacteria from sewage can cause severe gastro-intestinal illnesses. Proper construction and maintenance can help avoid water quality concerns.

**Popo Agie  
Conservation District**

**211 S. 2nd Street  
Lander, WY 82520**

*“Your Conservation  
Dollars At Work”*

# Water Quality And Your Septic System

*Brought to you by:*

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# Be Good to Yourself and Your Neighbors

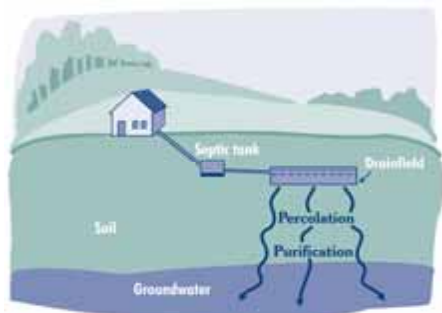


## Septic Systems: The Basics

When it comes to situating a new septic system, always remember “location, location, location”. Before construction begins, take a look at the NRCS Soil Survey for the Lander Area. This survey can provide valuable information on septic system placement.

Also, check with the Fremont County Planning Department regarding permits, proper setbacks for drinking water wells and setbacks for your neighbor’s property.

Finally, know how your tank, drainfield, and soil all function together to purify water and absorb liquids to ensure your septic system will work efficiently now and into the future.

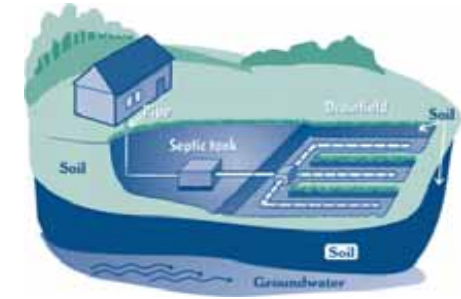


*Septic systems provide small-scale purification of household waste for rural homes.*

## Protect Your Septic System

If properly designed, your septic system can provide long-term, effective treatment of household wastewater. If your septic system isn’t properly maintained, you may need to replace it, costing you thousands of dollars and potentially contaminating groundwater. No one wants to flush a toilet into a drinking water supply. Follow these simple steps to help protect your septic system and avoid costly repairs.

1. Inspect your system every 1 to 2 years and have your tank pumped if necessary (3 to 5 years). Contact a licensed service professional for services.
2. Use household water efficiently so as not to over load your septic tank. Try composting instead of a garbage disposal unit.
3. Don’t dispose of household hazardous wastes in sinks or toilets. Oils, solvents and other chemicals can disrupt the natural biological treatment necessary to purify household wastes.
4. Care for your drainfield. Avoid driving or parking vehicles on your drainfield. Plant only grass (*NO trees or shrubs*) over and near your drainfield to avoid damaging lines from invasive roots.



*Example of a properly designed septic system.*

## Signs of Septic System Failure

Contrary to popular belief, septic systems are not maintenance-free. Signs of improper maintenance or neglect include backed-up plumbing, lush grass over the drainage field, and smelly seepage around your home. Long before you may notice these signs, the system may discharge untreated sewage into valuable ground or surface water supplies!

