



News Release

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DEQ Encourages Homeowners to Recognize SepticSmart Week

Nearly one quarter of all American households—more than 26 million homes—depend on septic systems to treat their wastewater. In Oklahoma, on average about 6,000 septic systems are installed each year. Proper septic system care and maintenance is vital to the protection of public health and preservation of valuable water resources. Septic systems that are not properly maintained can lead to system back-ups and overflows. This can result in costly repairs, polluted local waterways, and risks to public health and the environment.

This week marks the Environmental Protection Agency's first-ever SepticSmart Week. During this week, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality encourages homeowners to get SepticSmart. During SepticSmart Week, homeowners can do their part by being aware of these tips:

- In general, homeowners should have their systems inspected every three years by a licensed contractor and have their tanks pumped when necessary, generally every three to five years.
- Avoid pouring fats, grease, and solids down the drain.
- Be water efficient and spread out water use. Consider fixing plumbing leaks and installing faucet aerators. Also, spread out laundry and dishwasher loads throughout the day. Too much water at once can overload a system if it hasn't been pumped recently.
- Remind guests not to park or drive on a system's drainfield, where the vehicle's weight could damage buried pipes or disrupt underground flow.

EPA's SepticSmart program promotes proper septic system care and maintenance all year long, helping to educate homeowners about the need for periodic septic system maintenance and proper daily use. In addition to educating homeowners, SepticSmart serves as an online resource for industry practitioners, local governments, and community organizations, providing access to tools to help educate clients and residents.

For more information, visit <http://www.deq.state.ok.us/eclsnew/index.htm>

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