



GUADALUPE COUNTY, TEXAS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

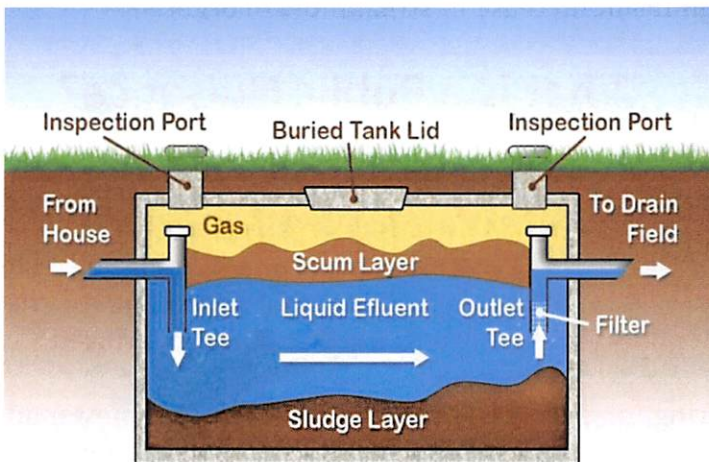
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THIS ISSUE:

- Septic Tank Awareness
- 5 Signs to Pump Septic
- Use Water Efficiently
- Different Flood Types
- Does a 100-yr Storm = a 100-yr Flood?
- Public Nuisance

Holidays are the time of year when we frequently entertain guests, host parties, and have social gatherings in our homes. This could be a potential problem if you have a septic system. It's important to know how your septic system works before considering using any additives. Your septic system is designed to keep solids, grease and oils from entering and clogging your drainfield. Bacteria in the tank break down organic solids into gas and liquid. Some solids in the tank, such as sand, gravel, dirt and bits of plastic cannot be broken down by any enzyme or bacteria. These settle out and accumulate, creating a layer of sludge at the bottom of the tank and requires periodic pumping to remove. Grease and oils rise to the surface as scum, while the relatively clear liquid between these layers flows out into the drainfield and infiltrates into the soil.



Profile of a Typical Septic Tank

5 Signs Your Septic Tank Needs to be Pumped

Pooling Water: If you are seeing pooling water on the lawn around your septic system's drainfield, you could have an overflowing septic tank.

Slow Drains: Drains are moving slowly in the home might mean there's a clog. But if there still slow after you've used a septic friendly drain cleaner, your tank could be full.

Odors: Your septic system's not only collecting your waste but the dirty water coming from washing your dishes, washing clothes, and showering. Along with the black water the toilet sends down, this will create a smelly mixture that is very noticeable.

Healthy Lawn: If the grass above the septic system is really lush and green, this might mean the water is coming out of your system and it may be leaking or full.

Sewer Backup: This is the most obvious and the most damaging. Sewer backup are a true sign that you have to empty your tank. Look for backup in your home's lowest drains, since this is where they'll show up first.

Use Water Efficiently!

- Install high-efficiency showerheads, dishwashers, and washing machines
- Fill the bathtub with only as much water as needed
- Turn off water while brushing your teeth
- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when they're full
- Maintain your plumbing to eliminate leaks



Please contact this office for floodplain advice on property protection, flood proofing measures and financial assistance

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FLOODS?

RIVER FLOODING

River flooding is one of the most common types of inland flood; occurring when a body of water exceeds its capacity. When a river "burst its banks, typically due to high rainfall over a prolonged period of time, localized flooding can cause considerable damage to surrounding properties.

FLASH FLOODING

Caused by heavy and sudden rainfall, flash flooding happens when the ground cannot absorb the water as quickly as it falls. This type of flood usually subsides quickly, but while it lasts can be fast-moving and dangerous.

GROUNDWATER FLOODING

As rain falls over an extended period, the ground becomes saturated with water until it cannot absorb any more. When this happens, water rises above the ground surface and causes flooding.

DRAIN & SEWER FLOODING

Sewer drains are not always attributed to the weather. As well as rainfall, they could occur as a result of blockage or similar failure within the drainage system.

Overflows from a septic system are not considered a flood unless a flood has caused a backup and overflow. (Insurance Fact)

Does a 100-year storm always cause a 100-year flood?

No. Several factors can independently influence the cause-and-effect relation between rainfall and streamflow.

- When rainfall data are collected at a point within a river basin, it is highly unlikely that the same amount of rainfall occurred uniformly throughout the entire basin. Some parts of the basin may even remain dry, supplying no additional runoff to the streamflow and lessening the impact of the storm.

- Existing conditions prior to the storm can influence the amount of stormwater runoff. Dry soil allows greater infiltration of rainfall and reduces the amount of runoff entering the stream. Conversely, soil that is already wet from previous rains has a lower capacity for infiltration, allowing more runoff.

- Another factor to consider is the relation between the duration of the storm and the size of the river basin in which the storm occurs. A 100-yr storm of 30 minutes duration in a 1-mile basin will have a more significant effect on streamflow than the same storm in a 50-mile basin. Generally, streams with larger drainage areas require storms of larger duration for a significant increase in streamflow to occur.



What is a Public Nuisance?

Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 343

Sec. 343.011 Public Nuisance:

- (1) keeping, storing, or accumulating refuse on premises in a neighborhood unless the refuse is entirely contained in a closed receptacle;
- (2) keeping, storing, or accumulating rubbish, including newspapers, abandoned vehicles, refrigerators, stoves, furniture, tires, and cans, on premises in a neighborhood or within 300 feet of a public street for 10 days or more, unless the rubbish or object is completely enclosed in a building or is not visible from a public street;
- (3) maintaining premises in a manner that creates an unsanitary condition likely to attract or harbor mosquitoes, rodents, vermin, or other disease-carrying pests;
- (4) allowing weeds (see definition of weeds Sec. 343.002) to grow on premises in a neighborhood if the weeds are located within 300 feet of another residence or commercial establishment;
- (5) maintaining a building in a manner that is structurally unsafe or constitutes a hazard to safety, health, or public welfare because of inadequate maintenance, unsanitary conditions, dilapidation, obsolescence, disaster, damage, or abandonment or because it constitutes a fire hazard.

Report a Public Nuisance to the Code Enforcement Department

http://www.co.guadalupe.tx.us/eh/pdfs/complaint_report.pdf