

# Health Effects of Sewage Water Pollution

Raw sewage doesn't smell good. But there are even more important reasons that every home needs adequate sewage treatment.

◆ What's in the sewage water that's running out of a pipe in someone's backyard or into a stream?

- Toilet paper
- Feces and urine
- Bacteria and viruses
- Worms
- Cleaners and soap
- Dirt



◆ Doesn't sound very good, does it? Actually, raw sewage can make you sick. It can also make your neighbors sick and your pets sick. These things can happen when:

- You use straight pipes and have no septic system.
- The drainfield isn't working right.
- The septic tank is too full and needs to be pumped.



◆ How can sickness be spread? By:

- Walking in polluted streams
- Walking in sewage water
- Not washing your hands after handling your pets
- Flies that land in sewage water and then on you or your food
- Eating garden produce watered with polluted water

◆ Small children and older adults are most likely to get sick from polluted water. Some of the symptoms are:

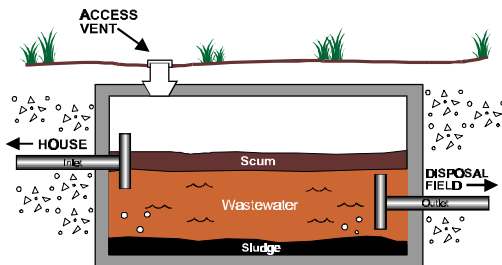
- Diarrhea
- Skin fungus
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Worms
- Hepatitis
- Stomach cramps
- Parasites
- Unexplained viruses
- Sudden weight loss



## Maintaining Septic Systems is Key for Health

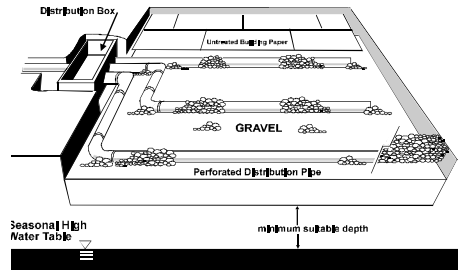
It is important that all septic systems are properly maintained. Septic systems must be working right to stop water pollution and keep our families healthy.

- ◆ A septic system is made up of a septic tank, distribution box and a drainfield. The septic tank receives all the wastewater from the house. The solids settle to the bottom of the septic tank where bacteria break down the solids.



- ◆ The liquid that comes out of the septic tank then flows to the distribution box. The distribution box feeds the water to the drainfield where it slowly trickles through the pipes. Soil and

gravel then filter out a lot of the bacteria. The water then goes into the groundwater.



- ◆ If you do have a septic system:

- DON'T drive over the tank or drainfield.
- DON'T build on the drainfield or dig in drain lines.
- DON'T plant trees within 25 feet of drain lines.
- DON'T flush tampons, cigarette butts, or disposable diapers down the toilet.
- DON'T pour grease, oils, fat, pesticides, paints, etc. down the drain.
- DON'T use a garbage disposal.

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This material is based upon work supported by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under special project number EWQI-10395.

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April, 1999

## Water Pollution From Sewage -- How Can It Affect My Health?

### What Can I Do to Prevent It?



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