ABOVE GRADE SEPTIC
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# Septic Sense: The Do's, Don'ts, and Definitely Nots

## 💩 What *Not* to Put in Your Septic System

Your septic system works hard enough — don't make it digest what it was never designed to handle. If you wouldn't eat it, flush it, or explain it to your grandmother, it probably doesn't belong in your tank.

## 🚫 Keep These Out (Seriously)

- **Fats, oils, and grease** – Your pipes aren't a deep fryer. These cool, harden, and cause big problems.
- **Herbicides, pesticides, and toxins** – They kill the good bacteria that make your system tick. Think of them as antibiotics for your tank — and that's *not* a good thing.
- **Household chemicals, paints, mop water, automotive fluids, and drain cleaners** – Your tank is not a science experiment.
- **Non-biodegradable items** – Bandages, cat litter, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, condoms, diapers, "flushable" wipes (spoiler: they're not), hair, paper towels, rags, wrappers... basically anything that doesn't melt in water.
- **Citrus products** – Lemons and septic systems don't mix. Save them for your iced tea.
- **Antibiotics, home-brew waste, and medicines** – Keep the good bacteria in your tank healthy and sober.
- **Water softener discharge** – Too much salt water can overwhelm your system (and your plumber's patience).

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## ⚙️ How to Be a Good Septic Citizen

- **Spread laundry throughout the week.** Your system needs breaks too — don't drown it on Sundays.
- **Use low-sudsing, low-phosphate, biodegradable detergents.** Suds belong in your tub, not your tank.
- **Go easy on bath products.** Epsom salts and bubble baths are fine in moderation — your septic system doesn't need a spa day.
- **Use delay cycles on your dishwasher and washing machine.** Running them at night or during off-hours helps your system recover between peak use — and might even save you a few bucks on power.
- **Use the garbage disposal sparingly.** It's not a wood chipper. Toss grease and food scraps in the trash or compost instead.

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- **Choose non-chlorine, biodegradable, non-toxic cleaners.** Harsh chemicals = grumpy bacteria.
- **Conserve water.** Your tank prefers sipping to chugging.

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## 🌿 Extra Tips to Keep Things Flowing

- **Keep vegetation trimmed** over the drain field — grass is great, trees and shrubs not so much.
- **Never drive or park** on your drain field unless you're shopping for a new one.
- **Keep lids and hatches accessible.** "Out of sight, out of mind" doesn't work with septic systems.
- **Fix leaks fast.** Even a slow drip can flood your system over time.

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💡 **Pro Tip:** A happy septic system doesn't smell, doesn't back up, and doesn't send you surprise repair bills. Treat it right, and it'll quietly do its job for years — just the way we all like it.