

Risk Assessment Worksheets

Household Wastewater Treatment

Assessment Worksheet 1 - Septic System Design and Location

The assessment worksheet below will help you identify potential environmental risks related to your drinking water and the treatment of your home's wastewater. For each question indicate your risk level in the right-hand column. Some choices may not correspond exactly to your situation. Choose the response that best fits. When finished, turn to the Household Wastewater Treatment Action Worksheet on page 4-12 and record your medium and high-risk practices. The goal is to lower your risks. Use the BMP recommendations provided in this section to help you decide how to best reduce pollution.

	LOW RISK	MEDIUM RISK	HIGH RISK	YOUR RISK
Capacity of system	My tank is designed to handle more wastewater than is required, based on the size of my home.	My capacity just meets load requirements, but I watch out for factors indicating system overload. I use water conservation measures.	I've added bathrooms, bedrooms, or water-using appliances without reexamining the capacity of my wastewater system.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Drainfield	My drainfield is over 100 feet from my well. Depending on soil type, the drainfield is between 100-300 feet from any surface water source.	My drainfield is 100 feet away from my well and surface waters.	My drainfield is less than 100 feet from the lake or a drinking water well.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Tank	My tank is more than 50 feet from wells and surface waters.		My tank is less than 50 feet from wells or surface waters.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Soil type	My soil is fine-textured like clay loams or silty clay.	My soil is made up of medium to fine sands, loamy sands, or silt loam.	My soil is coarse-textured like sand, sandy loam, or gravel.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Safety devices	An alarm is installed on the pumping chamber or lift station to indicate that the tank is full or power has been cut off to the pump.		No alarm is installed to indicate tank overflow or that power has been cut off to the pump.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High

Assessment Worksheet 2 - On-Site System Maintenance

Use the worksheet below to rate your risks related to maintaining the septic system. When finished, turn to the Household Wastewater Treatment Action Worksheet on page 4-12 and record your medium and high-risk practices.

	LOW RISK	MEDIUM RISK	HIGH RISK	YOUR RISK
Age of system or holding tank	My system is 5 years old or less.	My system is between 6 and 20 years old.	My system is more than 20 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Type of tank	I have a cement tank.	I have a steel or fiberglass tank.	I have a cesspool.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Condition of tank	My tank and baffles are inspected for cracks; repairs are made promptly.		I do not know the condition of my tank and baffles.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Tank pumping	My septic tank is pumped on a regular basis as determined by an annual inspection. The holding tanks are pumped as needed.	My septic tank has been pumped, but the date is unknown.	My septic tank has never been pumped. The holding tank overflows or leaks.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Drainfield protection	I keep vehicles and other heavy objects or activities away from the drainfield area.	Occasionally, the drainfield is compacted by heavy objects or activities.	I allow vehicles, livestock, heavy objects, or other disturbances in my drainfield area.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Diverting surface water	I divert all surface runoff away from the drainfield area.	Some surface water flows into the drainfield area.	All runoff from land, rooftops, and driveways flows into my drainfield.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Plantings over the drainfield	I have grass or other shallow-rooted plantings over my drainfield.		I have trees, shrubs, or vegetables growing on or near my drainfield.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Signs of trouble	My household drains flow freely. No sewage odors inside or outside are evident. My soil over the drainfield is firm and dry and my well water tests negative for <i>coliform</i> bacteria.	My household drains run slowly. Soil over the drainfield is sometimes wet.	My household drains back up. Sewage odors can be noticed in the house or yard. The soil is wet or spongy in the drainfield area. My well water tests positive for coliform bacteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High

Assessment Worksheet 3 - Septic or Sewage System Inputs

Use the worksheet below to rate your risks relating to system inputs. When finished, turn to the Household Wastewater Treatment Action Worksheet on page 4-12 and record your medium and high-risk practices.

	LOW RISK	MEDIUM RISK	HIGH RISK	YOUR RISK
Solids	I do not use a garbage disposal. I do not dispose of bulky items (disposable diapers, sanitary napkins) in the toilet.	I sometimes use a garbage disposal.	I almost always use a garbage disposal, and sometimes dispose of bulky items in the toilet.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Dissolved solids (household chemicals)	I use household chemicals carefully (paints, cleaning products). I never pour solvents, fuels, or other hazardous chemicals down the drain. I do not use a water softener.	I sometimes pour diluted household chemicals down the drain.	I frequently pour diluted household chemicals down the drain.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Floatable solids	I do not dispose of cooking grease or oils into my septic system. I wipe off oil and grease from cooking utensils before washing.	I routinely dispose of grease or oils into my septic system and have made no attempt to reduce their disposal.	I always dispose of cooking grease or oils in my household septic system.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High
Water use	I use water conservatively and maintain my water fixtures regularly.		I do not use any water conservation measures. I have no water-conserving fixtures. Some of my fixtures are leaking.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High

