
CITY OF CAMAS STEP/STEF SYSTEM PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE



City of Camas
Public Works

www.cityofcamas.us

7:00 am-3:30 pm 360-817-1563
After Hours call 360-737-0592

ONSITE WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEMS (STEP/STEF)

Your home includes a reliable septic tank effluent pumping system (STEP) or a septic tank effluent filter system (STEF) for the collection of household wastewater. Onsite wastewater treatment decomposes household waste and allows for recycling precious water resources.

The tank allows bacteria to break down in a natural process (unless bleach and anti-bacterial soaps are used). The two-compartment tank separates solids from liquids. The liquids are gravity or pressured into our main sewer line, which goes to our sewer treatment plant to become usable fertilizer.

To keep your system in good working order, nothing should be disposed into a wastewater system that has not been ingested, other than toilet tissue, mild detergents, and wash water.

The City of Camas pumps the tanks every 7-10 years.

AT THE ALARM PANEL



Locate your sewer alarm panel at your residence. The panel will be approximately 12" x 12" if it is a STEP system, and a 6" x 6" if a STEF system. Take immediate action to correct the problem in the event of an alarm. Call the City of Camas Water-Sewer Department at 360-817-1563 during working hours of 7:00 am – 3:30 pm, or after hours at 360-737-0592.

The alarm will sound like a smoke alarm. Silence the alarm by pushing the lighted button located directly above the "Push to Silence" label on the front of the electrical control panel. The City of Camas services both the alarm panels and STEP/STEF tanks.

Do not turn off the main circuit breaker to the wastewater pumps when going on vacation. If there is any infiltration or inflow into the system, the pumps will need to operate.

WHAT NOT TO FLUSH OR ALLOW DOWN YOUR DRAINS

- Excessive amount of bath or body oils
- Water softener backwash
- Flammable or toxic products
- Household cleaners, especially floor wax and rug cleaners
- Chlorine bleach, chlorides, and pool or spa products
- Pesticides, herbicides, or agricultural chemicals or fertilizers
- Special additives that claim to enhance the performance of your tank or system.

Additives can cause major damage to your system. The natural microorganisms that grow in your system produce their own enzymes that are sufficient for breaking down and digesting nutrients in the wastewater.

- Coffee grounds, tea bags, kitty litter, egg shells, cigarette butts, chewing tobacco, diapers, gum, paper towels, sanitary napkins, cooking grease, large amounts of hair, baby wipes (even if they claim to be flushable). These items should go into your garbage

HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD CLEANING SUBSTITUTES

Hazardous Cleaner – Don't Use

Ammonia-based cleaners

Disinfectants

Drain decloggers

Scouring cleaners

Carpet/Upholstery cleaners

Toilet cleaners

Laundry detergents

Substitute Cleaner – Do Use

Sprinkle baking soda on a damp sponge. For windows, use a solution of 2 TBS white vinegar to 1 QT water. Place the mixture into a spray bottle.

Use borax: ½ cup in a gallon of water.

Use a plunger or metal snake, clean or remove debris from drain trap.

Use baking soda on a damp sponge. Or use Bon Ami – it won't scratch.

Sprinkle dry cornstarch or baking soda on carpet or upholstery and then vacuum. For tougher stains, blot up with white vinegar in soapy water.

Sprinkle baking soda or Bon Ami, then scrub with toilet bowl brush.

Use zero phosphate content

GREEN RISER LIDS ON PROPERTY

Before digging in your yard, contact "811 - Call Before You Dig". If you can, plan landscaping and permanent outdoor structures before installation. **DO NOT cover green riser lids with landscaping (City of Camas Ordinance 13.62.080).** Lid must be visible to the naked eye, and with a minimum of one-inch separation from the top of the riser lid to the adjacent ground surface.



When planning the landscaping for your yard, please remember:

- ✓ The STEP/STEF tank lids must be visible and accessible at all times.
- ✓ No shrubs or plants shall be within three-feet of the tank lids for easy accessibility.
- ✓ No structures of any kind can be built over tank lids and the lids must not be covered by bark dust or yard ornaments.

Picture to left shows violation of city code with plants too close and hanging over the tank lids.

DAMAGE TO THE STEP/STEF SYSTEM – THE COST OF REPAIRING ANY DAMAGE TO A SYSTEM WHICH HAS RESULTED FROM THE NEGLIGENCE, GROSS NEGLIGENCE, OR INTENTIONAL ACTS OF THE OWNER SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OWNER. THIS RESPONSIBILITY INCLUDES ANY CLOGGING WHICH MAY RESULT DUE TO IMPROPER USE OF THE SYSTEM BY THE HOMEOWNER (CITY OF CAMAS ORDINANCE 13.62.070).

Don't drive over your tank or lids.

Don't open or enter your tank or any buried components in our system. City of Camas employees will complete any maintenance on the tank. Keep the access lid secure to the riser at all times. If bolts are lost or damaged, call the City of Camas Water-Sewer Department at 360-817-1563.

Don't dump RV waste into the wastewater system.