

Flood

INFORMATION



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

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www.ndhealth.gov/flood

Private Sewer and Septic Systems

1. Prevent basement groundwater seepage.

Move snow away from the foundation of the house. If the ground is sloped 1-inch per foot away from the house, moving snow just 3 to 5 feet from the house will reduce seepage problems.

2. Prepare sump pumps.

- Clean the sump pump and pit.
- Test the pump by pouring water into the pit.
- Consider having an extra portable, submersible sump pump.
- Make sure the discharge hose carries the water several feet away from the house to a well-drained area sloping away from the home. If the hose outlet is too close to the house foundation or on flat ground, the water may simply recycle down through the house drain tile.



(Note: It may be illegal to discharge sump pump water to a city's sanitary sewer system. Doing so may overload the system and cause sewage backup.)

3. Limit impacts to the septic system.

A drainfield is designed to filter the water normally discharged from the house. When excess water from rain, snow or flooding is added to the drainfield, its ability to handle household water becomes severely limited.

- Make sure the septic tank is sealed.
- Plug all drains in the basement to prevent wastewater from backing up into the house.
- Drastically reduce water usage in the house. Some suggested ways include:
 - Check faucets, shower heads, toilets, sinks and any other water-using devices for leaks, and repair them as soon as possible.
 - Don't discharge water from a basement sump pump into the septic system.
 - Don't let water from roof gutters discharge into the drainfield area.
 - Reduce the number of times you flush the toilet.
 - Reduce the number of showers and baths. (A good rule of thumb might be one bath/shower every other day per person.)
 - Don't use the dishwasher or garbage disposal.
 - Don't wash clothing. Instead, take it to a public laundry, if possible.

Assistance

Contact your local public health unit for city- or county-specific regulations.

For additional information, please contact the North Dakota Department of Health, Environmental Health Section:

Water Quality – 701.328.5210

Municipal Facilities – 701.328.5211