



About Your Wastewater

For our purposes, we'll divide the reservation into two groups: People with lagoon wastewater systems, and people with On-site Septic Systems.

If you have an On-site Septic System, then you need to have the septic tank cleaned and pumped every 3 to 5 years. If you can open the cover to your tank and measure the sludge inside with a pole, then the sludge level should not be more than one third of the tank. The problem is some of you may not know where the cover to your septic tank is. So here's a guide to cleaning and pumping your septic tank that could be helpful:

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|
| # people using system | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| Years between each pumping | 12 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Remember, if the sludge gets too high and overflows, it may clog the absorption field. Once the absorption field is clogged, cleaning the tank is of little

benefit. Repairs can be costly. To insure effective operation have the tank inspected annually.

You can help your septic system by not having a garbage disposal, as this adds solids more rapidly to your septic system. Consider composting to eliminate some of those scraps. Also, do not put poisons or household chemical wastes into your septic system as these may kill the bacteria in your septic tank that are vital to the breakdown process. Don't flush down diapers, newspapers, paper towels, or facial tissues, for they don't break down readily in the septic tank; flush down only toilet paper.

You should mark the location of your septic tank to prevent accidentally driving over it. Conserve water in order to give the solids time to break down in your tank.

If you have a ton of laundry to do, spread out your laundry chores rather than trying to do it all in one day. Too much laundry in one day can flush out the natural bacteria in your tank.

Apparently, the tribe is not presently cleaning and pumping the tanks for you, so you may have to seek the services that are available locally. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

(info from employees and from the web)

Test Your Environmental IQ *answers on back*

- One harmful chemical that is contained in a compact fluorescent light bulb is: a) freon b) zinc c) mercury d) sulfur dioxide
- Radon kills how many Americans each year with lung cancer? a) 50,000 b) 5,000 c) 30,000 d) 20,000
- Which product is recycled the most? a) aluminum b) paper c) plastic d) glass
- What does mold need in order to exist in your home? a) moisture b) drywall c) dirty laundry d) garbage
- An odorless, colorless gas that can be fatal when breathed that comes from combustion is: a) carbon monoxide b) propane c) sulfur dioxide d) chlorinated solvents.
- Which of these gases is not a greenhouse gas contributing to global warming? a) methane b) nitrogen c) water vapor d) ozone
- Which animal is on the Endangered Species list? a) horny-headed chub b) whitetail deer c) eagle d) topeka shiner

Keeping Your Home Safe from Carbon Monoxide information from EPA website

Carbon monoxide is an odorless and colorless gas that can be harmful, even fatal, when breathed for long periods of time. In the home, it generally comes from appliances that burn fuel that are used incorrectly or have been improperly maintained. Idling cars and their exhaust fumes actually cause the most carbon monoxide deaths, and hundreds die each year from carbon monoxide.

Symptoms

Low levels can cause shortness of breath, mild nausea, and mild headaches. Moderate levels can



cause severe headaches, dizziness, mental confusion, nausea, feeling faint. Moderate levels can kill if they persist for a long time. High levels can cause death in minutes.

Should you suspect carbon monoxide in your home, then call the Fire Department and report it; they'll scan your home with detection

equipment.

Prevention

Make sure all new appliances are properly vented, and don't sleep in a room with an unvented gas or kerosene space heater.

Don't use gasoline powered engines in enclosed spaces.

Don't ever use a charcoal grill indoors.

If your symptoms only appear at home and disappear when you leave home, then there may be a problem. You may need to inspect your appliances, furnace, and so on.

For Those of You Who Utilize Facultative Lagoons info from seminars

For those of you with your own lagoons, keep them mowed to allow proper air flow and to prevent weeds from overtaking your berm walls. Keep little trees from growing and becoming bigger trees with bigger roots that can create leaks and break down the infrastructure of your berm. If the berm is too damaged by tree roots or other

causes, then contaminants will leak from the lagoon and could leech into groundwater. The solution to that problem can be costly.

Control the weeds around your lagoon by pulling them by hand or using a sickle mower since these methods spread less weed seed,

Don't allow trees to take over your lagoon or you could be headed for expensive repairs!

and there's no danger of dropping a gas motor in your lagoon. The gas might kill vital bacteria.

If you have duckweed in the summer, then push a floatable across the water surface and duckweed will be removed; it has no roots.

Answers to the Quiz (are you smarter than a 5th grader?)

Answers

1. C, mercury
2. D, 20,000
3. B, paper (by far)
4. A, moisture (not much mold in the desert)
5. A, carbon monoxide (the others

have odors or aren't gases)

6. B, nitrogen
7. D, Topeka Shiner

If you answered all 7 correctly, you might just be an environmental mental marvel. You should be running things. If you didn't answer any of them correctly, uh-oh! You

might not be smarter than a 5th grader, but at least you tried.

