

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NHDES Wants Residents to Take Care of Their Septic Systems

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) urges residents to be cautious with the use of strong antibacterial cleaning materials and disposing of those materials in septic systems. Introducing large volumes of these cleaning agents to septic system can have detrimental effect on the bacteria that are vital to the function of a healthy system. Without the essential bacteria in a septic tank and/or in the effluent disposal area (leachfield) the system will prematurely fail resulting in the system having to be replaced. Replacing a system in failure can be a very expensive undertaking that could be avoided with careful and proper use.

NHDES has noticed increased percentage of applications to replace failed individual sewage disposal systems (septic systems) over that last few months as compared to 2019. During the spring months, NHDES normally receives higher numbers of applications for the replacement of failed systems most likely due to amount of rain and snow melt. However, this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, many people are now working remotely from home. A hydraulic overload on systems (too much water) resulting from the increased use of home septic systems may be contributing to the increased number of failures. Equally important to consider is the disposal of strong cleaning materials in septic systems. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the New Hampshire State Government encourage regular personal hygiene and extensive cleaning of homes and businesses to deter the spread of the virus, but be careful as to the amount of these cleaning solutions go down the drain to your septic system.

If you have not yet, please also read the NHDES Press Release dated March 24, 2020 regarding what materials should and should not be flushed down the toilet. This press release can be found at <https://www.des.nh.gov/media/pr/2020/20200324-flush.htm>. Additionally, NHDES wants to remind residents that septic tanks should be pumped every three to five years. More information about proper septic system maintenance can be found at <https://getpumpednh.com/>.

If you have additional questions, please contact Jim Martin, NHDES Public Information Officer, at james.martin@des.nh.gov or (603) 271-3710.