



**Department of Public Works
BUREAU OF UTILITIES**

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**ASHLEIGH KNOLLS WASTEWATER COLLECTION
TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL SYSTEM**

**USER MANUAL
COUNTY-OWNED SEPTIC TANK**

I. INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides information for the user of the new wastewater treatment and disposal system for the Ashleigh Knolls subdivision. Included are descriptions and specific instructions for the proper use and maintenance of the County-owned individual septic systems for homeowners of Ashleigh Knolls. The Howard County Department of Public Works encourages citizen participation and questions through the Bureau of Utilities, telephone number: 410-313-4900.

The wastewater management plan combines a unique system of wastewater management, for example:

- individual septic tanks for homes
- wastewater management whereby septic waste will be moved by pump to the shared leachfield for treatment and ultimate disposal by soil absorption.

The unique wastewater treatment and disposal system combines individual septic tanks for each home with a community disposal area wherein septic waste is pumped to the community subsurface disposal area for treatment and ultimate disposal by subsurface soil absorption.

Implementation of the Ashleigh Knolls Subdivision is now underway through construction of new systems. The following System User's Guide provides valuable information to you. A feature of the Ashleigh Knolls system is that every home has a septic tank somewhere on the property. It will be maintained by the Department of Public Works, but we need your help.

II. A GUIDE FOR THE SEPTIC SYSTEM USER

Review this User's Manual carefully, and please follow this list of Do's and Don'ts

IMPORTANT NOTE: You do NOT need to add any agents or treatment chemicals to the septic tank to assist its natural bacteriological process. Adding chemicals may only interfere with the natural function of your septic system.

DO	DON'T
Familiarize yourself with the location of the following objects on your property: • emergency contact phone number – this can be found on the cover of the pump control panel, it is 410-313-4900 • pump control panel • electrical disconnect panel • septic tank and risers(slate squares) • curb stop valve box • sewer standpipe cleanouts • well for drinking water Call 410-313-4900 if the alarm control light or buzzer should go off. County personnel will service all equipment, making emergency calls when needed. However, plumbing from the house to the septic tank is the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain and repair. When the alarm sounds, water use can be continued for several hours if the quantity is restricted. Leave the area over and around the septic system open and free of obstruction. This should also include the area around the pump control panel and electrical disconnect panel. Hook up "domestic wastewater" only to the gravity sewage collection discharge from your home. If it doesn't come from washing or using the toilet, don't put it into the septic system.	DON'T attempt to enter the septic tank or pump chamber. DON'T try to service the pump control or electrical disconnect panels. DON'T subject the septic tank area, curbstop valve box, or sewer cleanout standpipe to vehicular traffic, or place any permanent construction over these items. Weight can damage your septic system. DON'T build or plant near or around the septic tank, curbstop valve box, sewer cleanout standpipe, pump control and electrical disconnect panels. DON'T dig in the septic or electrical and control panel areas, either with equipment or by hand, without first contacting the Department of Public Works. DON'T connect, tie in, or divert any gutter downspout, surface runoff water, storm water, basement sump pumps, or well water treatment/softener system backwash to the septic system. DON'T block or restrict access to the septic tank, cleanout standpipe, curbstop valve box, or electrical and pump control panels.

II. A GUIDE FOR THE SEPTIC SYSTEM USER

DO	DON'T
Always practice water conservation: • be sure all water using devices in the home operate properly • install water saving devices (low flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and toilet tank dams). • repair leaking toilets and faucets • run washing machine and dishwasher only when you have a full load • spread out the laundry: wash the clothes over a period of several days • keep a bottle of cold water in the refrigerator Place kitchen waste in the garbage. Use a strainer in the kitchen sink. Place cooking oils and grease into a container to cool off. Then dispose of the waste into the garbage. Properly dispose of hazardous household chemicals. Carefully measure soaps, detergents, and disinfectants. Maintain good surface water drainage away from the septic tank and pump chamber located on your property. Direct water treatment/softener back wash water away from the septic system and drinking water wells.	DON'T use garbage disposals in your home. DON'T use automatic dishwashers that have built in disposals or add enzymes. DON'T use automatic toilet bowl cleaners, they will kill bacteria in the treatment process. DON'T wash out paint brushes or drywall compound into the septic system. DON'T flush flammable, toxic, or hazardous waste (such as degreasers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, strong disinfectants, prescription medications, fuels, paints, stains, varnishes, paint thinners, or solvents) into the septic system. DON'T flush paper towels, sanitary napkins and pads, or cloth goods into the septic system. DON'T put abrasive material (such as aquarium gravel, kitty litter, glass, egg shells, sand, stone, or dirt) into the septic system.

III. SHARED LEACHFIELD

The sewage treatment and disposal area, located beyond the end of Helmsdale Court, is the final discharge point for the wastewater. All discharge occurs underground, and the area above is designated as a preservation parcel. While this natural area is to be enjoyed for its variety of plants and wildlife, the active portion of the disposal area is a “no trespassing” area due to the variety of exposed pipes above ground.

CONCLUSION

If you would like more information on your septic tank, the Ashleigh Knolls system, or about any of our clean water programs, the Howard County Department of Public Works will be happy to answer questions. *Write* the Bureau of Utilities, Howard County Department of Public Works, 8270 Old Montgomery Road, Columbia, MD 21045, *or* call 410-313-4900.