



Department of Public Works
BUREAU OF UTILITIES

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**ON-SITE WASTEWATER
TREATMENT SYSTEM USER'S GUIDE**

**RIGGS MEADOW WASTEWATER COLLECTION
TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL SYSTEM**

**USER MANUAL
COUNTY-OWNED ON-SITE TREATMENT**

April 2003

I. INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides information for the user of the new wastewater treatment and disposal system for the Riggs Meadow subdivision. Included are descriptions and specific instructions for the proper use and maintenance of the County-owned individual septic systems for homeowners of Riggs Meadow. 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 both pressure and gravity collection systems with conventional on-site treatment. The system contains the following:

- Individual gravity sewer house connection for each home
- Pump chamber with individual sewage grinder pump for each home
- Common one and one-half inch pressure sewer main
- Grinder pump control panel box on each home
- Septic tanks
- Distribution to the shared leachfield for treatment and ultimate disposal by soil absorption

The unique wastewater treatment and disposal system combines a duplex grinder pump chamber for each home with a community disposal area. Domestic sewage is pumped from the chamber to septic tanks located at the community disposal area. Physical separation takes place in these tanks, and then the effluent is conveyed by gravity to the community subsurface disposal area for treatment and ultimate disposal by subsurface soil absorption.

The following System User's Guide provides valuable information to you. The Riggs Meadow Shared Septic system 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 • Sewer standpipe cleanouts • Sewage grinder pump chamber • Curb stop valve box • Well for drinking water Call 410-313-4900 if; the alarm control light or buzzer should go off, you are experiencing sewer backup problems with your entire residence or observe any surface discharge. County personnel will inspect and service the site, making emergency calls when needed. However, plumbing from the house to the cleanout standpipe located at the public/private property easement is the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain and repair. When the pump is in a state of alarm, water use can be continued with a duplex pump set-up. The high level alarm buzzer can be silenced by pushing the rubber sealed button located on the underside of the pump control panel. Leave the area over and around the public standpipe cleanout, grinder pump chamber, and pump control panel visible and free of obstructions.	DON'T subject the sewer cleanout standpipe to vehicular traffic, or place any permanent construction over these items. DON'T build or plant near or around, sewer cleanout standpipe, pump chamber, or pump control panel. 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 shared septic system. 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 shared 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 shared septic system.

III. A GUIDE FOR THE SEPTIC SYSTEM USER

DO	DON'T
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 Shared Septic system. 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. 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 Properly dispose of hazardous household chemicals. Carefully measure soaps, detergents, and disinfectants. Maintain good surface water drainage away from the sewage grinder pump chamber located on your property. Direct water treatment/softener back wash water away from the shared septic system and drinking water wells.	DON'T flush paper towels, sanitary napkins and pads, or cloth goods into the shared septic system. DON'T put abrasive material (such as aquarium gravel, kitty litter, glass, egg shells, sand, stone, plastics, or dirt) into the shared septic system. Additionally the pump manufacturer specifically warns that the following items should never be introduced into any sewer • Explosives • Flammable material • Strong chemicals • Gasoline • Lubricating oil and /or grease Oil and grease will rapidly destroy the stator of a progressive cavity pump. Premature failure of the stator will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Repairs for the improper use of the sewage grinder pump may become the responsibility of the homeowner.

IV. SHARED LEACHFIELD

The sewage treatment and disposal area is located on the north side of Sycamore Springs Court. All discharge occurs underground, 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 sewer connection, the Riggs Meadow Shared Septic 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.

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