

SepticSmart Program Announcement / Press Release
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Title: **SEPTICSMART WEEK – SEPT 19-23**

Smith Mountain Lake Association announces the 10th annual *SepticSmart* Week taking place on September 19-23, 2022. EPA's SepticSmart initiative is a nation-wide public education effort with resources for homeowners with **septic** systems, local organizations and government. Bill Butterfield, President of SMLA said, “this annual event is one of the cornerstones for the homeowners of the Smith Mountain Lake watershed to call attention to the importance of caring for and maintaining septic systems. If your septic system is not properly maintained you may be risking your family’s health, hurting the water quality of our lake, and flushing thousands of dollars down the drain.”

You can educate yourself on septic systems by going to the epa.gov/septic where you will find educational materials.

Do Your Part, Be SepticSmart: The Do's and Don'ts of Your Septic System

Learn these simple steps to protect your home, health, environment and property value:

Protect It and Inspect It:

Do:

- Have your system inspected (in general) every three years by a licensed contractor and have the tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years.

Think at the Sink:

Don't:

- Pour cooking grease or oil down the sink or toilet.
- Rinse coffee grounds into the sink.
- Pour household chemicals down the sink or flush them.

Do:

- Eliminate or limit the use of a garbage disposal.
- Properly dispose of coffee grounds & food.
- Put grease in a container to harden before discarding in the trash.

Don't Overload the Commode:

Don't:

- Flush non-degradable products or chemicals, such as feminine hygiene products, condoms, dental floss, diapers, cigarette butts, cat litter, paper towels, pharmaceuticals.

Do:

- Dispose of these items in the trash can!

Shield Your Field:

Don't:

- Park or drive on your drainfield. The weight can damage the drain lines.
- Plant trees or shrubs too close to your drainfield, roots can grow into your system and clog it.

Do:

- Consult a septic service professional to advise you of the proper distance for planting trees and shrubs, depending on your septic tank location.

Don't Strain Your Drain:

Don't

- Concentrate your water use by using your dishwasher, shower, washing machine, and toilet at the same time. All that extra water can really strain your septic system.

Do:

- Stagger the use of water-generating appliances. This can be helpful especially if your system has not been pumped in a long time.
- Become more [water efficient](#) by fixing plumbing leaks and consider installing bathroom and kitchen faucet aerators and water-efficient products.



For more SepticSmart tips, visit: www.epa.gov/septicSMART

Membership and charitable donations support the good work of SMLA, so we need your help to continue our mission to protect the water of Smith Mountain Lake, and to promote safe recreation. Please visit our website at www.smlassociation.org for more information on the work that SMLA performs and how you can support our continued efforts. It is our best and most efficient insurance for maintaining our property values and preserving our treasure—The Jewel of the Blue Ridge.