



DESIGNATED MAINTENANCE AREAS FACTS

Designated Maintenance Areas or DMA are areas that do not have a public sewer system and have been determined by the State Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to be areas that are sensitive to septic system waste contamination. Improper operation or maintenance of a septic system in these areas is a serious threat to the local ground and surface water. Therefore, as an alternative to the development of a costly sewer system, an agreement was made between the local residents and the RWQCB that allows residents to keep their septic systems that have absorption fields, with the condition that they allow an inspection by San Bernardino County Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) every other year. The inspector must have safe access to perform an inspection, which consists of looking for signs of obvious system failure. The nominal fee is paid on a biennially basis to fund the inspection program to allow residents to remain on private septic systems within a DMA.

HOW TO PREVENT PROBLEMS WITH YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

- Regularly inspect, pump, and maintain your septic tank system.
- Conserve water in your home, fix leaking fixtures promptly.
- Redirect surface water flow away from the absorption field.
- Do not drive vehicles or heavy equipment over the absorption field.
- Avoid planting deep or large rooted plants on or near the absorption field.
- Keep chemicals, hazardous waste, and non-decomposing trash out of the septic system (NO diapers, wet wipes, dental floss, etc.).

WARNING SIGNS OF A FAILED OR FAILING SEPTIC SYSTEM

- Slow draining toilets and/or drains or toilets that won't flush.
- Sewage backing up into the tub when the toilet is flushed.
- Sewage running to the surface of the ground above the absorption field, especially after storms when the ground is already wet.
- Wet, mushy ground, or lush green grass and/or plants near the absorption field.
- Sewage odors.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY SYSTEM FAILED?

- Contact a properly licensed contractor to investigate your septic system.
- Permits from Building and Safety may be necessary. Replacement may require additional approvals from DEHS.