

# WBUD Customer's Manual

## Collection Systems & Distributed Wastewater Systems



Preventive Maintenance for  
Homes with Collection Systems and  
Distributed Wastewater Systems



WATTS BAR UTILITY DISTRICT

800.882.5099  
[www.wbud.org](http://www.wbud.org)

# WBUD Customer's Manual



## Welcome!

Your home is connected to a Wastewater Collection System or an Distributed Wastewater System.

When properly designed and installed, the wastewater system does an excellent job of breaking down waste at the homeowner's house. This is known as primary treatment. Next, the wastewater is filtered through a gravity effluent filter or a pump vault and filter and sent via a watertight collection line to the secondary facility. If your waste is sent to a Distributed Wastewater System, it can clean the wastewater so well that the final discharge of water can be pumped into nearby streams or rivers, used to irrigate golf courses, or even used to recharge the water table without affecting the local ecosystem.

WBUD which owns and operates the Treatment System that serves your home is responsible for maintenance and operation of all system components following the double clean-out from your home.

To ensure the vitality of your home's system and that of the collection system or treatment system as a whole, you and every member of your household need to know what can and cannot be put down the drain or flushed at your home. Please read on to learn which items are okay and which are not.

If you have guests who want to "help out in the kitchen," be sure to tell them, too. With this preventive maintenance, along with inspections by WBUD, your system should function for decades.

If a wastewater problem arises that appears to be beyond the plumbing in your home and the double clean-out from your home, you should contact WBUD immediately. If the problem is deemed to be related to the plumbing within your home or the double clean-out and your home, a licensed plumber should be contacted.

# WBUD Customer's Manual

## Preventive Maintenance for Homes on Distributed Wastewater Collection, Treatment and Disposal

### Do's and Don'ts for the Homeowner

As a general rule, please adhere to the following guidelines regarding items and substances that can and cannot be flushed, put down the drain, or disposed of into your home's plumbing system. Failure to do so may result in increased costs and/or tank pumping fees or fines:



**DON'T** flush dangerous and damaging substances into your wastewater treatment system. (Please refer to the "Substitutes for Household Hazardous Wastes," section).

Specifically, do not flush:

- Excessive amounts of bath or body oils
- Water softener backwash, treatments, or salts
- Flammable or toxic products
- Household cleaners, especially floor wax and rug cleaners
- Chlorine bleach, chlorides, and pool or spa products
- Pesticides, herbicides, or agricultural chemicals or fertilizers



**DON'T** use special additives that are touted to enhance the performance of your tank or system. The natural microorganisms that grow in your system generate their own enzymes that are sufficient for breaking down and digesting nutrients in the wastewater. Additives can cause major damage to the collection system and treatment system and you may be **financially responsible!**



**DO** use your trashcan to dispose of substances that cause maintenance problems and/or increase the need for septage pumping. Dispose of the following with your trash:

- Egg shells, kitty litter, coffee grounds, tea bags, cigarettes butts, chewing tobacco
- Paper towels, newspapers, sanitary napkins, diapers, gum, candy wrappers and tampons
- Cooking grease and meats
- Rags, large amounts of hair, and pet dander



**DO** collect grease in a container and dispose with your trash. And avoid using garbage disposals excessively. Compost scraps or dispose with your trash, also. Food byproducts accelerate the need for septage pumping and increase maintenance.

# WBUD Customer's Manual



**DON'T** let your faucets run to prevent waterlines from freezing. Running faucets can increase your water usage by tenfold. This can overload your system and cause further problems. Take the necessary steps to properly insulate all of your plumbing fixtures, inside and outside.

**DON'T** use unnecessary amounts of water. It is normal for a person to use 50 gallons of water per day. To help conserve water, follow the tips below:



**DON'T** ignore leaky plumbing fixtures; repair them. Leaky toilets can allow up to 8,000 gallons of water to go down the drain in a 24 hour period. This can cause your water bill to average more than ten times your normal bill due to wasted water! This also can overload your system and cause maintenance problems and/or costs.



**DO** help save water:

- Take showers that are as short as possible. Also, do not overuse larger soaking tubs (use sparingly).
- Don't let water run while you are not using it. For example, shut the water off while you are brushing your teeth; only turn the water on to rinse your toothbrush or mouth.
- Only run the dishwasher and washing machine when you have a full load and avoid doing several loads back to back.
- When replacing showerheads and toilets, use low-flow models or a model to save water



**DO** clean the lint traps on your washing machine or dryer before each use. This will help hinder lint and unnecessary materials from entering your pump tank. This in turn will help keep your tank pumping frequencies to a minimum. (This normally takes just a few minutes.)

# WBUD Customer's Manual



## Substitutes for Household Hazardous Wastes

**DO** use alternatives for household dangerous materials and cleaners. Use the following products in lieu of more harmful conventional cleaners. See the list below for recommended alternatives to conventional cleaners:

**Cleaners that contain Ammonia:** Sprinkle baking soda on a damp sponge. To clean glass and windows use a solution of 2 tablespoons of white vinegar in 1 quart of water. Store the mixture in a spray bottle for easy use.

**Disinfectants:** Mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of borax into one gallon of water and apply to desired area. This mixture can also be used to deodorize.

**Drain unclogging gels and liquids:** DO NOT use any of these. DO use a standard plunger or a metal plumbing snake. If this does not work, remove and clean the S-traps in the sink or plumbing lines.

**Scouring cleaners and powders:** See "Cleaners that contain Ammonia" above. You could also search for natural products that do not scratch surfaces or harm wastewater treatment systems. They are widely available.

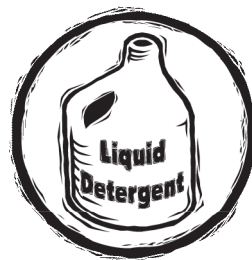
**Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners:** Sprinkle some dry cornstarch or baking soda on the affected area then vacuum. If the stain is too tough for that, you can blot the stain with white vinegar mixed into soapy water.

**Toilet Cleaners:** Sprinkle baking soda onto a toilet brush and then scrub the bowl.

**Furniture and Floor Polish/Cleaner:** Use an oil-based soap with warm water as a cleaner then dry off with a soft rag. For a polish, mix 1 part lemon juice and 2 parts oil of any kind. You can also seek natural and alternative cleaners that work well too.

**Metal Polish:** To clean brass and copper, scrub the items with a sliced lemon coated with table salt. To clean stainless steel, use a scouring pad dipped in mild soapy water. For silver, apply toothpaste to a scrap rag and rub the paste gently onto the silver. Wipe clean with a damp cloth then dry.

**Oven cleaners:** On new oven spills, sprinkler normal table salt on the spill areas then scrub with a scouring pad or cloth. For older set-in spills, pour baking soda on the spills then scour with a scouring pad.



**Laundry detergents:** Always use a zero phosphate detergent or use soap flakes with  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of washing soda. Before switching, wash clothes in pure washing soda to remove accumulated residues.

# WBUD Customer's Manual



**DON'T** dig in your yard if you do not know where the components of your wastewater treatment system are located. If possible, avoid these areas when landscaping and adding permanent outdoor structures. Bird baths and picnic tables are okay to place anywhere in your yard, as they are easily removed and don't harm your system.

State law requires that utilities be notified before beginning excavation. Call the One-Call center before you dig. Phone Number 811.



**DON'T** drive your vehicle or any heavy machinery over the lid or surface of your tank or cover buried components of your system. If there is a chance of vehicular traffic over your system, construct a barrier or plant rows of shrubs that would block this traffic.



**DON'T** ever enter your tank. Any work on your system shall be done by a authorized WBUD representative. Gasses in the tank may be fatal.



**DON'T** dump waste from RVs or campers into your tank, down the drain, or into your plumbing system. It will increase the frequency of necessary tank pumping. When dumped directly into the pump vault, RV waste can clog equipment or cause it to lose function or longevity, causing undue maintenance and repair costs. Chemicals that may be found in RV waste can literally kill off the necessary bacteria and microorganisms that live in your tank and provide primary treatment.

**DON'T** ever connect rain gutters or storm drains to the sewer or allow surface water to drain into it. Don't discharge hot tub water into your system. The additional water will increase costs and reduce the capacity of the collection and treatment systems. It can also wash excess solids through the tank.

**DON'T** remove the riser access lid on your tank for any reason, ever. If bolts are lost or damaged, contact WBUD for a maintenance technician. This person is the only one that should ever remove the lid from your tank unless otherwise directed.

## Outside the House



**WBUD** will provide regular monitoring and maintenance. The access lids must be accessible at all times for maintenance.

# WBUD Customer's Manual

## **Important! Caution!**

Only a qualified electrician or authorized installer and/or wastewater operator should work on your control panel. The control panel and all other components of your wastewater system are property of WBUD. The homeowner shall never service these items under any circumstances. If your system needs attention, please contact WBUD.

## **At the Control Panel**



**DO** familiarize yourself with the location of the components of your wastewater system and electrical control panel.

**DO** take immediate action to correct the problem by calling WBUD immediately in the event of an alarm condition; it resembles the sound of a smoke alarm.



**DO** remember that if there is an audible alarm coming from your panel, it can be silenced by pushing the lighted "Push to Silence" button on the front of the control panel. With ordinary use, your tank has a reserve storage of 24 hours.

**DO** leave all circuit breakers on in the control panel and in the house at all times, even when going on vacation. This will allow for the discharging of water whenever necessary.

# WBUD Customer's Manual

**DON'T** flush Swiffer sheets or anything similar. By doing so will damage the sewer system at your house and could potentially damage the wastewater treatment system. The financial responsibility will be charged to the property owner of record.

**DON'T** flush flushable wipes, such as baby wipes or wipes that say they are septic tank friendly. They cause major maintenance problems and the property owner of record will be financial responsible for damages and extra maintenance.

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**Don't** vandalize or tolerate vandalism of your sewer system. Repairs necessitated by abuse or deliberate misuse will be charged to the property owner. Too many problems can lead to rate increases for everyone or service charges on your account.

Do realize that all legal matters, monthly sewer charges and assessment payments are the obligation and responsibility of the property owner of record. All correspondence will be directed to the property owner of record and the owner will be responsible for compliance and informing any tenant users.