

# A Homeowners Guide to Septic Tank Effluent Pumping (STEP) Systems



**NORTHWEST  
ARKANSAS  
UTILITY  
SERVICES INC**  
(479) 530-5926

*Northwest Arkansas Utility Service, Inc is providing this guideline to help you become more familiar with your STEP sewer system*

## *Your STEP System is your responsibility*

STEP stands for Septic Tank Effluent Pumping. The STEP system on your property is owned by you. It was provided by the builder of your home when constructing it and is part of your property. The maintenance and repairs are provided to you by the utility company which we have in place for your subdivision. Please make yourself aware of how your system operates by reading this helpful information. It will eliminate unnecessary costly repairs to your system and keep it functioning properly.

## *How does a STEP System work?*

The STEP System includes a septic tank and a pump. Sewage is conveyed by gravity to the tank through your homes plumbing line. Inside the STEP tank the liquid waste is pumped under pressure to the sewer system in the subdivision which our company operates and maintains for the entire subdivision. The solid waste will remain in the STEP tank where it naturally degrades and is eventually pumped out.

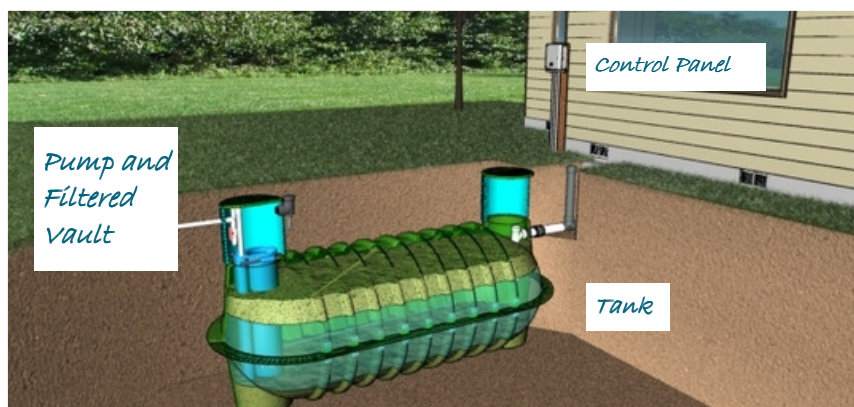
STEP systems typically turn on every one or two days with normal use.

Northwest Arkansas Utility Companies maintenance personnel will inspect your tank at least every 5 to 7 years and will determine when the solids accumulated in your tank need to be pumped out, which is roughly every 7 to 10 years. If you suspect that your tank may need maintenance, please give us a call. We will be glad to inspect your tank.

## *Top four ways to protect Your STEP system:*

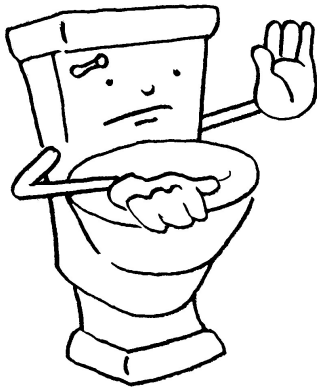
1. **DO** call NWAUS at (479) 530-5926 if you hear or see the alarm go off.
2. **DO** let NWAUS authorized repair and maintenance technicians operate the system. Do not attempt to do it yourself.
3. **DON'T** use your system for garbage.
4. **DON'T** dispose of toxic or flammable material into your system

## *Components of your STEP system*



## How to care for your STEP System

### KNOW YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES



### FLUSH RESPONSIBLY

### Use Water Efficiently

Average indoor water use in the typical single family home is almost 250 gallons per day. Dripping faucets can waste as much as 2000 gallons of water each year and leaky toilets can waste as much as 200 gallons each day. The more water a household conserves, the less water enters the STEP system and the wastewater treatment plant.

### Items you should not allow into the STEP tank

Be careful with undesirable substances that could be flushed into the sewer. Never flush the following items. Doing so will cause the pump and filter in your system to operate inefficiently. If these items are flushed into the system they can cause premature pump failure which will cause you an unnecessary expense as a homeowner.



### Minimize the use of garbage disposals

Using your garbage disposal increases the amount of solids entering the STEP tank and thus the frequency of maintenance visits to pump the solids from the tank. More maintenance means higher costs for everyone.

### Additives may cause damage

Special additives that claim to enhance the performance of your tank usually don't and may cause major damage to the effectiveness of the treatment plant. The natural bacteria that form inside of your STEP tank are sufficient.

**If your STEP system alarm goes off  
CALL YOUR WASTEWATER UTILITY OPERATOR**

**(479) 530-5926**

### NEVER FLUSH

- DENTAL FLOSS
- FATS OILS OR GREASE
- FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS
- CONDOMS
- DIAPERS
- WIPES (includes those labeled as "flushable")
- COTTON SWABS
- HAIR
- CAT LITTER
- COFFEE GROUNDS
- CIGARETTE BUTTS



**DO NOT USE YOUR TOILET AS A TRASH CAN**