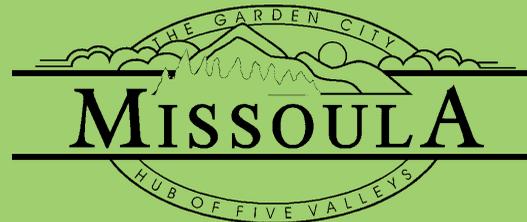


Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) systems in existing high-density areas where it was not feasible to install gravity sewers due to location or costs. Wastewater (effluent) is pumped to the city's centralized wastewater treatment facility with electrical pumps (STEPS) located in the tank, protecting the ground water from pollutants. If your home is equipped with one of these systems, please refer to the following operating guidelines.



Illustration courtesy of Onanco Systems, Inc.



City of Missoula Wastewater Treatment
1100 Clark Fork Lane
Missoula, Montana 59808
T. 406-552-6600
www.ci.missoula.mt.us/wastewater



STEP Sewer System OPERATING GUIDELINES

STEP Sewer System

The average amount of wastewater produced by each person in the U.S. is estimated at 100 gallons per day. This presents a serious need for wastewater management. When a residence has a septic tank in the yard but there is no leach field, there is danger of it coming out of the tank and going into the ground, which eventually affects the aquifer that supplies our drinking water. To prevent this, the City of Missoula has installed individual Septic



Who's Responsible?

The City of Missoula Wastewater staff is responsible for providing service and maintaining the STEP system equipment.

The property owner is responsible for the plumbing that runs from the home to the STEP tank and will be charged for any intentional damage done to the system.

Routine STEP System maintenance is done between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Repairs are usually made within 24 hours, during business hours. In case of an emergency outside of regular business hours, call 523-4886 and follow the recorded instructions.

Billing Questions? Please call 523-4679 during business hours (8 a.m. – 5 p.m.) if you have questions about your account.

Don't tolerate vandalism of STEP systems. Repeated maintenance and repair problems increase the costs for everyone.

Know the Alarm System

Become familiar with the location of the electrical control panel (located on the outside wall of your home near the electrical service) and the tank riser lid (the 24" diameter green plastic lid in your yard).

If the alarm goes off, call 523-4886 as soon as you hear it (day or night). It sounds like a smoke alarm. To silence the audible alarm, push the illuminated light directly above the "Push To Silence" label on the front of the electrical control panel.

If the alarm sounds outside of Wastewater Division regular business hours (8 a.m. – 5 p.m.), dial 523-4886 and follow the recorded instructions. Messages are checked every morning, seven days a week.

Any time the alarm sounds, minimize water usage immediately until a maintenance worker arrives to make repairs. Although the tank does have some reserve capacity, the capacity varies widely, depending on water usage. With minimized water usage, the tank typically has a reserve capacity of 12 to 24 hours.

Operating Precautions

Don't start digging on your property before determining where underground utilities are located. Use the 'one call locator' number for this service (1-200-424-5555).

Don't connect any plumbing to a STEP pressure discharge pipe.

Rain gutters and storm drains are prohibited by City ordinance from being connected to a STEP system. Such connections can greatly reduce tank capacity as well as capacities of the City's sewer collection system and the wastewater treatment facility.

Don't flush large amounts of materials such as grease, hair, cigarette filters or sanitary napkins. Materials of these types can increase maintenance and costs.

Industrial-type chemicals and wastes may cause a system failure. Flushing flammable or toxic materials is dangerous.

Avoid driving over the riser lid with riding mowers, trucks or cars. This may cause damage unless the tank is equipped with a traffic-bearing lid.

Please maintain access to the tank. Large, heavy planters or ornaments placed on the tank riser lid may damage it and make access difficult.

Power Outages

During long term power outages of several hours or more, you should minimize water usage. Even though the STEP system's discharge pump and alarm will not operate without power, wastewater from your home can continue to fill the tank if your water service has not been interrupted. Use only what is absolutely necessary. Check basement or lower drains often.

If the drains begin to fill with water, discontinue all water usage. Call the Wastewater Treatment facility immediately (523-4886).

Short-term power outages of a few minutes to a few hours should not be of concern. The reserve tank capacity can handle short-term events like these.

STEP systems are designed so that your neighbors' drains cannot back up into yours. If you stop using water, the drains will stop filling with water.

Note: Many types of water softeners and filters automatically discharge water into the STEP tank. This can reduce the tank's reserve capacity without your being aware of it. Be sure to check such systems regularly.