

Troubleshooting Tips

Symptom	Possible Causes	Action
Toilets and sinks start to drain slowly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drains may be clogged. • Septic tank may need to be pumped out. • Drainfield pipe may be partially blocked. • Plumbing vents may not be properly connected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a plumber check the drains and vents. • Have a ROWP check septic tank.
Extra plant growth over drainfield area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clogged soil on the bottom of the drainfield, trenches or bed causing water to pond. • Excess hydraulic or organic loading to the septic system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ROWP inspect septic tank and drainfield inspection ports and/or cleanouts. • Check water meter records for excess water usage that may indicate plumbing fixture leaks and/or inspect fixtures for leakage.
Foul odours outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plumbing vents may not be properly connected. • Septic tank cover may not be properly sealed or covered with earth. • Wastewater may be ponding in the vicinity of the drainfield or surfacing nearby (see below). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plumber check vents. • Have ROWP inspect septic tank and ensure the cover is sealed. • Inspect soil above and in the vicinity of the drainfield for excess moisture or ponded water.
Foul odours inside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plumbing traps may not be properly installed. • Electrical conduits for septic system pump may not be properly sealed. • Pipe leading from house to septic tank may be broken. • Wastewater may be backing up into the home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plumber inspect traps and inspect perimeter foundation drainage for presence of water during dry weather. • Have ROWP inspect the septic tank for the possible causes noted.
Waste water backing up into home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipe leading to septic tank may be blocked. • Pipe leading to drainfield may be blocked. • Drainfield may be damaged or clogged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ROWP inspect septic tank.
Effluent breaking out to ground surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil cover over pipes may not be deep enough. • Pipes may not be sloped properly. • Part of the drainfield may have settled or been lifted by frost heave so gravity cannot drain pipes properly. • Distribution system may be damaged. • Pipes and/or soils in drainfield may be full and not able to drain properly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ROWP check problems. • Inform Interior Health.
High nitrate and/or presence of coliform bacteria in nearby wells, lakes, rivers and or streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil below drainfield may be too coarse or too shallow to adequately treat the wastewater. • Water table may be too close to the bottom of the drainfield. • Wastewater may be breaking out from the drainfield into nearby drainage courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ROWP inspect drainfield, inspection ports or cleanouts. • Inform the Interior Health.