

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 3, 2025**

**Northern Michigan Public Health Agencies Promote**  
*SepticSmart Week: September 15–19, 2025*

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) is joining the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and partners across the country to recognize SepticSmart Week, taking place September 15–19, 2025. This annual observance raises awareness about the importance of proper septic system care and maintenance to protect public health, the environment, and the investment of homeowners.

Many Northern Michigan residents rely on septic systems to treat their household wastewater. When properly maintained, septic systems are safe and effective. But without regular care, septic systems can fail which can lead to contaminated drinking water/swimming beaches, harmful algae blooms, costly repairs, or damage to rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

“As stewards of clean water and healthy communities, we want to ensure residents understand the importance of caring for their septic systems,” said Daniel Thorell, BLDHD’s Health Officer. “A well-maintained septic system protects your family, your property, and the beautiful natural resources we enjoy here in Northern Michigan.”

**SepticSmart Tips for Homeowners**

Throughout SepticSmart Week, the EPA and local health departments will share educational materials to help residents extend the life of their systems. The campaign promotes simple, year-round tips:

- Think at the Sink: Don’t pour fats, oils, grease, or harsh chemicals down the drain.
- Don’t Overload the Commode: Only flush human waste and toilet paper—no wipes, floss, or trash.
- Don’t Strain Your Drain: Spread out laundry and dishwasher loads. Too much water at once can overwhelm your system.
- Shield Your Field: Keep vehicles, structures, trees, and excess water off the drainfield area.
- Protect It and Inspect It: Get your system inspected every 3 years by a licensed professional.
- Pump Your Tank: Schedule a septic tank pump-out every 3–5 years, or as recommended based on household size and usage.
- Keep Records: Maintain a folder with system diagrams, inspection reports, and pumping dates.

More homeowner resources and printable tip sheets are available at: <https://www.epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-week>

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