



## Health & Safety Guidelines for Residents & Businesses with Onsite Wastewater Systems Affected by Floodwater and Mud/Debris Flow

As our community deals with the impacts of floodwaters on home, businesses, and property, Alameda County Department of Environmental Health urges residents and business owners to take precautions to protect themselves and their families. Floodwater may contain raw sewage, animal waste, toxic substances, chemical compounds, fungus, bacteria, and other harmful materials. Storm debris and the effects of power outages may present additional hazards. If you have an onsite wastewater system (or septic system) and you observe surfacing sewage in the leachfield or around the tanks implement the following protocols in Chapter 45.4 of Alameda County Department of Environmental Health's Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Manual:

1. Immediately abate conditions that pose a threat to human health and/or the environment by hiring a Contractor, Septage Pumper and/or Qualified Professional to assist in immediately implementing the following interim abatement measures:
  - a. Stop all wastewater flows to the System;
  - b. Collect surfacing or ponding wastewater (must be done by a Septage Pumper);
  - c. Contain surfacing wastewater as close as practical to the failed System through the use of berms or other measures;
  - d. Isolate storm drain collection systems if wastewater has the potential to enter inlets;
  - e. Conduct general cleanup measures including removing all impacted debris;
  - f. Prevent public contact with wastewater by installing fencing or hazard tape and warning signs around the impacted area;
  - g. Wash down impacted impervious surfaces and collect and dispose of wash water in a sanitary sewer;
  - h. Notify adjacent property owners that have the potential to be directly affected by the surfacing sewage and or cleanup activities; and
2. Notify Alameda County Department of Environmental Health Onsite Wastewater System Program. Depending on the extent of the failing or failed septic system impacts, additional measures may need to be implemented including but not limited to:
  - a. Collection of well water, surface water, and/or soil samples for analysis of fecal indicator bacteria to determine the extent of the release and threat to public health and the environment;
  - b. Implementation of additional soil cleanup measures including but not limited to covering the impacted area with clean soil, excavation, aeration, or disinfection of the impacted soil.
3. If you have an advanced onsite wastewater treatment system, contact your Onsite Wastewater System Service Provider to inspect the system and perform necessary repair to ensure the system is properly functioning.
4. Depending on the extent of impact of the wastewater release to the environment, oversight by other regulatory agencies may be required including but not limited to the Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Water Resources Control Board, and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife.