

Disposal of Septic System Wastewater

Subsurface application	-----	Pressure or gravity-fed distribution to trench system.	Bed or seepage pit.	Field or silo tile drainage system. Pipe to surface.
Horizontal separation of wastewater disposal site from water supply.	-----	Subsurface disposal downslope more than 50 feet from well or spring.	Subsurface disposal downslope less than 50 feet from well or spring.	Subsurface disposal upslope from well or spring.
Vertical separation of wastewater disposal site from water supply	-----	More than 6 feet to groundwater table or bedrock.	More than 3 feet but less than 6 feet to groundwater table or bedrock.	Less than 3 feet to groundwater table or bedrock.
Subsurface application rate	-----	Below design capacity.	At design capacity.	Above design capacity.
Soils	-----	Medium- or fine-textured soils (silt loam, loam, clay loams, clay).	Medium- to coarse-textured soils (sandy loam, sands).	Very coarse sands or gravel.
Use this total to calculate risk rank:				Rank Number Total:

CALCULATE RISK RANK

Step 1:

Sum up the rankings for the categories you completed and divide by the total number of categories ranked. Carry your answer out to one decimal point.

Rank Number Total _____ ÷ No. of categories ranked _____ = Risk Rank _____

Risk Categories

- 3.6-4.0 = low risk
- 2.6-3.5 = low to moderate risk
- 1.6-2.5 = moderate to high risk
- 1.0-1.5 = high risk

This ranking gives you an idea of how your well or spring management practices as a whole might be affecting your drinking water. Later you will combine this risk ranking with other farmstead management rankings in Worksheet No. 13, "Overall Risk Assessment." This ranking should serve only as a very general guide, not a definitive indicator of contamination. Because it represents an averaging of many individual rankings, it can mask any individual rankings (such as 1's or 2's) that should be of concern (see Step 2.).

Step 2:

Look over your ranking for each category:

- Low-risk practices (4's): ideal; should be your goal despite cost and effort.
- Low-to-moderate risk practices (3's): provide reasonable groundwater protection.
- Moderate-to-high-risk practices (2's): inadequate protection in many circumstances.
- High-risk practices (1's): inadequate; pose a high risk of polluting groundwater.

Any individual rankings of "1" require immediate attention. Some concerns you can take care of right away; others could be a major-or costly-project, requiring planning and prioritizing before you take action. Note the activities that you identified as 1's to be listed later under "High-Risk Activities" in Worksheet No. 13.