



Protecting Septic Tanks and Wells

When preparing private fuel tanks, septic tanks and water wells for flooding, just remember: Four-Three-Two.

“There are four things to do for your water well, three steps to take on your fuel tanks and two steps for your septic system,” said Douglas County Health Director, Dr. Adi Pour.

For your water well, remember four things:

- Set aside a supply of clean water before taking your well out of service.
- Disconnect the well’s power supply.
- Do the best job you can of sealing your well, including replacing the well vent with a water-tight plug.
- Use a heavy-duty trash bag or something like it to cover the top of your well and seal it to keep out dirt and other contaminants.

“You will still need to test and maybe disinfect your well after the flood,” Dr. Pour said. “But you can get back to normal faster and it should save you some money on maintenance calls.”

Take these three steps for your fuel tank:

- Tie the tank down tightly to prevent movement.
- Cover any vents if the water level is expected to go over the tank.
- Empty the fuel and fill it with water to keep it from floating away.

“You may not be able to return to a petroleum-contaminated home,” Dr. Pour said. “Now is the time to take care of your fuel tank.”

There are two important steps for preparing septic tanks for flooding:

- Fill your tank with liquids so it doesn’t float out of the ground.
- Plug your floor drains to keep sewage from backing up into your basement.

“These steps will help, but remember, flood water may still come into the basement through cracks and seams,” Dr. Pour said.

Nothing is guaranteed, but these steps will help protect your home from flood damage.

“It may not be as easy as one-two-three,” Dr. Pour said. “So just remember four-three-two.”