

# Managing Stormwater in Allenstown

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Stormwater, or runoff, is the water that flows as a result of rain or snowmelt. Stormwater travels across pavement and other surfaces collecting sediment, chemicals, and pollutants, including but not limited to motor oil, gasoline, lawn chemicals, pet waste, and deicing chemicals. It can carry these harmful pollutants directly into waterways, contaminating water used for drinking, recreation, and for local wildlife.

Residents of Allenstown benefit from the town's location along the Merrimack and Suncook Rivers and it is of the utmost importance to keep the quality of these waters to the highest standards. There are many steps that the town and residents can take to protect waterways and drinking water. This flyer is the just one in a series about how residents can do their part. Read on to learn more.

## How does your septic system affect local waterbodies?

Many homeowners, businesses, and property owners rely on septic systems as a way to safely treat and release their wastewater. When wastewater is released, the water infiltrates the groundwater, replenishing groundwater and surface waters. If a septic system is not properly maintained or not properly functioning, pollutants typically filtered out in the septic system can leak into groundwater, directly affecting well water used for drinking and into nearby surface waters. Properly maintaining, operating, and locating your septic system are all things you can do to protect water resources and nearby drinking water wells!



*Flip me over!*

*Additional resources and information can be found on the back side!*

# Be SepticSmart at home and out in the community!

Did you know that many public places use septic systems for their restrooms? This is especially true in rural places. Examples of places include restaurants, parks, campgrounds, and highway rest stops. Putting items not indented for a septic system into the toilet can clog pipes or clog the septic system itself. Here are some tips of what can you **SHOULD NOT** flush:

 **Toilet paper**

 **Paper towels**      **Plastics**  
**Cigarettes**      **Medications**  
**Disposable diapers**      **Cotton swabs/balls**  
**Wipes**      **Dental floss**  
**Feminine hygiene**      **Toxic substances**

## Maintaining Your Septic System & Why It's Important

A typical septic system should be serviced every one to three years by a septic system service provider. This can be dependent on the number of people living in your home and owners should talk with their service provider to find out what frequently is best for their system. But why is regular maintenance so important?

- **Saves you money.** Regular maintenance fees are significantly less compared to the cost of repairing or replacing a malfunctioning system.
- **Protects your property value.** An unusable septic system or one in disrepair will lower your property value, not to mention pose a potentially costly legal liability.
- **Keeps you, your neighbors, and the environment healthy.** Insufficiently treated sewage from underperforming septic systems can cause all of the disease-causing bacteria and viruses to infiltrate into groundwater, which can be spread in humans and animals. Contaminated groundwater not only works it way into wells, but eventually enter streams, rivers, lakes, and more, harming local ecosystems and impacting the habitats and wildlife within.

### Additional Resources:

Septic Systems, Septic Smart, United States Environmental Protection Agency  
<https://www.epa.gov/septic>

Think Blue Suncook  
<http://thinkbluesuncook.org/>

NH-MS4 Regional Stormwater Coalitions  
<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/nh-ms4/>

Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire  
<https://www.allenstownnh.gov/>

