

## SEPTIC SYSTEMS - PREPARING FOR FLOODING

If you are prepared when flooding occurs, your family can be safe and your system should survive. To prepare for a flood you should:

- *Make sure all septic tanks are full of liquid.* The high-water season is not the time to have tanks pumped; empty tanks are buoyant and may "pop" out of the ground during flooding.

## DURING A FLOOD

- *Discontinue use of your private sewage system.* Use portable toilets, if possible, or use any large container with a tight-fitting lid for a temporary toilet. Line the container with a plastic bag. After each use, add chlorine bleach or disinfectant to stop odor and kill germs. If necessary, bury wastes on high ground far away from your well.
- *Remember that a well may become contaminated during a flood.* Therefore, **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER.** Drink bottled water, or disinfect water before drinking. Contact your local health department for disinfection instructions.
- *Do not bathe or swim in floodwater.* It may contain harmful organisms.
- *Shut off power to a sewage lift pump if you have one in the house or in a pump chamber (mound, in-ground pressure, at-grade systems).*