

GLENN COUNTY

Planning & Community Development Services Agency Environmental Health Department

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MARDY THOMAS, Director

Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS)– After A Fire Disaster

An Onsite Waste Water Treatment System (OWTS), can be damaged during a fire resulting in possible pollution if not repaired properly. Use the guidance below when returning home to assess the condition of your property and OWTS after a fire in order to protect your health and ensure the proper function of your OWTS.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS:

- ✓ **Fall Hazards.** Be careful walking near a damaged system. The septic tank, a component of the OWTS, has riser lids that may be covered by debris, damaged or missing which may cause the structure to be unstable resulting in falls.
- ✓ **Rope off your septic system.** Prevent falls by marking the area as a potential hazard.
- ✓ **Never enter** the pump chamber or septic tank.
- ✓ **Burned structures** may also be damaged and should not be entered until cleared by an inspector.
- ✓ **Shut system power off** or verify power is shut down before inspecting the area.

DAMAGED SYSTEMS:

- ✓ **Stay out of the area if sewage backs up.** If the building is contaminated, abandon the building until all affected areas have been cleaned and sanitized.
- ✓ **Reduce water use and avoid pumping water to the septic system** until the system is inspected.
- ✓ **If you have a pressure distribution system** an OWTS Contractor should inspect and possibly repair the pump.
- ✓ **Shallow plastic piping associated with the OWTS can be damaged by intense heat or by heavy firefighting vehicles.** Surfacing effluent or wet areas along the OWTS area may indicate damaged piping.
- ✓ **Have your OWTS inspected and pumped** by a licensed OWTS contractor before using it again. A certified pumpers report will be required when re-building
- ✓ **Repairs to the OWTS** require a permit from the Glenn County Environmental Health Department.
- ✓ **Additional information** <https://www.countyofglenn.net/dept/planning-community-development-services/environmental-health/onsite-wastewater-treatment>