

1. Can I get a site map of where my septic system is located?

Yes, if there is a record of one. There are many septic system site maps on file. You can receive a copy of a site map by: 1) submitting a request to the Kern County Public Health, Environmental Health Division via email at EH@kerncounty.com or via phone at (661) 862-8740, or 2) submitting a request to the Kern County Public Works, Building Inspection Division via phone at (661) 862-5100.

2. Will my septic system be ruined if I don't use it for an extended period of time?

A standard septic system that was working properly and then not used for even an extended period of time, typically does not lose the ability to function properly once it is put back into use. Septic tanks, whether made from concrete or plastic, typically do not degrade or lose effectiveness when not in use. It is best to keep septic tanks full of water as they are not usually designed to withstand the pressure of the surrounding soil and groundwater when empty.

3. Do I need to pump my septic tank to be able to re-use it?

No; however, a septic tank is recommended to be pumped when it is about 1/3 full of solids. Solids are the sludge and scum that over time accumulates in a septic tank.

4. How do I determine if the septic system is undamaged and working?

A septic system that serves a structure that is damaged should be inspected by a wastewater specialist, such as a septic pumper. Note: The fees charged by the septic inspector are the responsibility of the property owner.

5. If the fire damaged my septic tank, do I have to replace the whole septic system?

No. Only that portion of the septic system that was damaged must be replaced. Typically, a septic system is comprised of a septic tank and a leach field. Each can be replaced separately when needed. When either is replaced, that portion must be brought into compliance under a permit issued by the Kern County Public Health, Environmental Health Division.

6. If the top of septic tank is damaged, may I repair it?

At all times safety concerns must be addressed with damaged septic tanks. If the top of a septic tank is damaged, typically the inside of the tank is exposed. This poses a safety hazard for people and wildlife to potentially fall into the tank. It also exposes people to the unhealthy wastewater inside. A damaged septic tank must be evaluated by a wastewater specialist to determine if a simple repair can be made, or if the tank must be replaced. Typically, no repairs are allowed on tanks that have undergone structural damage.