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# SELLING YOUR HOUSE? DON'T FORGET THE FLUSH!



**By Andrew Kearney, All County & Associates**

As a homeowner, you already know that buying a house can be stressful. But there are things to consider when selling your home that can slow things down or complicate the process. Having an issue-free onsite sewage disposal system, or septic system which it is normally called, is a point that can make selling your house easier to do.

Your home is your castle and your septic system is your invisible and critical moat. We often forget that all of our wastewater from the kitchen sink, wash tub and bathtub, toilets, even a water softener backwash are supposed to be connected to our septic system. The septic system can be in a few different forms, but most commonly it is a cement tank that is underground connected to a drain field. The top of your septic tank (to a lot of people's surprise) is only a foot below the ground surface. It is usually divided by a wall or walls that allows water to flow gradually from one side to the other to let the sedimentation occur in the first chamber(s) of the septic tank. As we go about our daily lives, we don't always give our septic system another thought. But when it is time to move, the septic system should take on a new priority, not only for the environmental concerns, but for removing an obstacle in selling your home. We, at All County and Associates, Inc. see this happen very frequently in real estate transactions. We often get the call after a deal "goes south" when we could have been there with inspection and consulting services before the house goes on the market. You don't want a Buyer to complete an inspection of your septic system and review very bad news. We hear on a daily basis "it works fine." "Working fine" and passing an inspection for the sale of real estate are two entirely separate conversations.

I am a firm believer in the old axiom, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." (thank you Ben Franklin). I also realize that, in the scheme of things, getting your septic system in irrefutable selling condition can feel like

a lot MORE than an OUNCE of prevention. It can be expensive or at the very least an expense you originally did not foresee when beginning to sell your home. But take pleasure in knowing that your efforts will be rewarded by a smooth settlement and you avoid the depression that comes with your buyer walking away when septic system issues turn them away from the deal.

If you hire a realtor to sell your home, a good realtor will tell you to have the septic system inspected if it has not been inspected recently. The realtor will tell you this because: 1) they know it is smart to do and 2) an issue with the septic system may hold up the deal. So, the realtor you hire could also be half of that ounce of prevention. Until the time comes when you want to sell your home, take care of your septic system. Here are some real common-sense things that you can do to treat your septic system properly: a) BIG #1 - NEVER flush solid or non-degradable things down the toilet. Don't flush hair, dental floss, cat litter or disposable wipes; b) have the system pumped out every one-to-three years. During the pumping the components should be inspected as well; c) use fixtures in your home that are water efficient and d) follow the system manufacturers instructions when adding cleaners and additives.

You can certainly call me, Andrew Kearney at All County Associates, Inc. at 610.469.3830 or email us at info@all-county-assoc.com. Having worked in the on-site sewage disposal system arena for 30 years we are an authority on the subject and can provide the direction you need to take care of your system.



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