

HUMAN WASTE SANITATION

Many disasters can and do cause damage to water and sewer systems. Public water supplies and public sewer systems may stop working, pump systems may go down due to loss of power, and water and sewer lines may be broken. Even private wells will not operate if the power is out unless a backup power source, such as a generator, is used. If a private septic system is equipped with a pump-up system, it will not operate if the power is out. Gravity flow septic tanks will continue to function properly as long as no pipes are broken. Dealing with human waste is an unavoidable situation should a disaster occur. It is important that the waste is handled properly to avoid the spread of diseases.

WATER OUT & SEWER WORKING:

If the sewer lines seem to be functioning properly (you can flush the toilet, it doesn't back up, and there are no obvious breaks in sewer lines), but the water is not working, then you can flush your toilet by pouring a bucket of water (three to five gallons, less for low flow toilets) directly into the bowl. You can use water from a swimming pool, the ocean, a pond, used bath water, or any other water source that is available.

SEWER LINES BROKEN or NOT WORKING:

If sewer lines are broken, but the toilet is intact – DO NOT FLUSH the toilet. Scoop out any water that remains in the bowl, next line the bowl with double bagged garbage bags to collect the waste. Place a small amount of sawdust, non-clay kitty litter, or other lightweight absorbing material in the bottom of the bag. You can add a small amount of disinfectant to the bag also. **IF YOU LIVE IN THE CITY:** When the bag is full, seal it up and place in a tightly sealed container **IF YOU HAVE SOME LAND AT LEAST AWAY FROM ANY HOMES OR WELLS TO DIG A TRENCH:** Dig a trench 24" – 30" deep and dispose of the contents of the bag into this trench. Sprinkle a small amount of powdered chlorinated lime on top of each layer of waste.

IF YOU HAVE NO TOILET:

Use a five gallon bucket (like a large paint bucket). Put a small amount of absorbent and light weight material in the bottom, then line it with a double layer plastic garbage bag. You can add some disinfectant or bleach to the bag if you wish. A toilet seat can be placed on top of the bucket, or some foam pipe insulator can be put around the rim for comfort. Dispose of the waste the same way as listed above.

Always use extreme caution when handling human waste. Thoroughly wash and sanitize your hands after handling the bags and buckets full of waste.

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION on building latrines and dealing with human waste, Google search, there are military field guides that provide lots of information.