

What to do if your STS floods or overflows

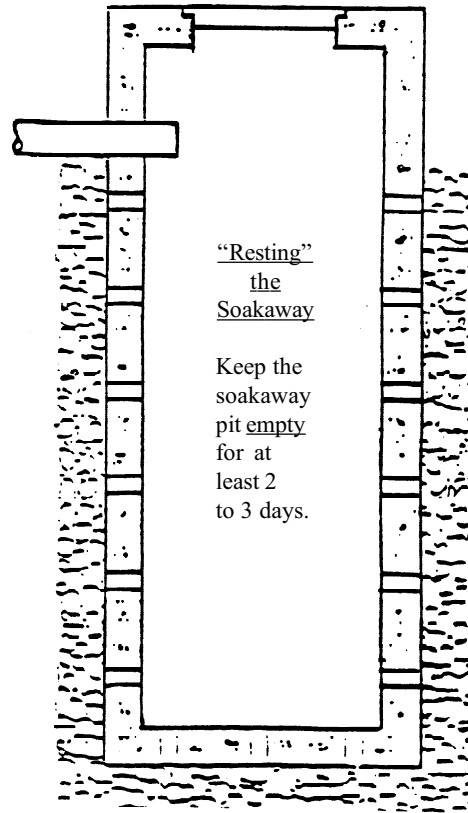
16. Whenever you observe flooding/overflow from your STS, you should:

Step 1 - Immediately reduce to an absolute minimum the discharges from your showers, baths, toilets and sinks etc.

Step 2 - Inspect and desludge your STS. Please consider emptying the whole STS. The methods described in paragraphs 10 and 12 should be followed.

Step 3 - Let your soakaway pit drain out completely and then leave it empty for at least 2 to 3 days for the soakaway pit and the adjacent soil to take a “rest”. If the soakaway pit remains full, then you must empty it by pumping. “Resting” can help clogged soakaway pits to recover.

Step 4 - Continue to minimize water usage after resuming discharge into the STS. Only when satisfied that the STS is working normally, should you return it to normal use. Otherwise, see paragraph 18.



17. If you have had occasional flooding or overflow from your STS, especially after rainfall, you should:

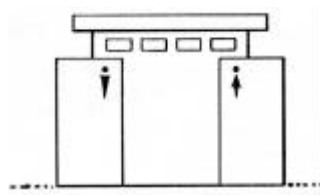
- reduce water usage and minimize discharge as much as possible,
- make no, or extremely little, discharge during rainfall and also on the day that follows,
- check that your water pipes are not leaking and that your water closets are not flushing continuously,
- check that rainwater cannot enter your STS, and
- look into extending your STS, if suspected to be undersized.

18. If your STS continuously floods/overflows, and this has started within the first year of using your STS, it is very likely that this is due to undersizing, poor siting and/or poor construction of your STS. If minimizing water usage, desludging and “resting” of the soakaway pit altogether had failed to prevent flooding/overflow from your STS, you should seriously consider:

- Investigating whether an extended, relocated or reconstructed STS would improve the situation; specialist advice may be useful here. Please see paragraph 24 as well.

Before improvement to your STS could be made, you should:

- Use public latrines and public bath-houses as far as possible.
- Use all practicable means to maintain at an absolute minimum the discharges from your showers, baths, toilets and sinks, etc.
- Inspect and desludge your STS frequently.



Enquiries on the Location of Public Bath-houses and Desludging Services

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Hotline

Tel. : 2868 0000

Disposal of sullage

19. For village houses built after 1984, the STS' s should have been designed to receive both sullage (i.e. wastewater from a bath, shower, sink or basin) and toilet waste. However, for older village houses, most of the STS' s had been designed to receive only toilet waste. For some old village houses, no STS had been provided at all. Sullage from these older village houses is commonly discharged via surface channels to the nearby streams. Disposal of sullage into surface channels can only be tolerated if this does not result in pollution. Where necessary, the EPD may require the responsible householder to install proper facilities (e.g. a new STS) or extend the existing STS for the disposal of both toilet waste and sullage.