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Homeowners with Pump Septic Systems Advised to Reduce Usage During a Power Shutoff

The Butte County Public Health, Division of Environmental Health advises homeowners who have onsite pump operating septic systems to reduce wastewater usage during a power shutoff. Most pump operating systems are built to handle short power outages and continue to operate for a day or two with reduced wastewater usage.

Homeowners with pump operating septic systems can reduce wastewater by limiting activities such as: taking showers, taking baths, doing laundry, toilet flushing, dishwashing and any other activity that produces wastewater. Pump operating septic systems have a limited reserve capacity to receive wastewater after the power is shut off, usually about 200 to 300 gallons. After the reserve capacity is used, wastewater flushing down the drains will typically back up into the house causing unsanitary conditions.

For assistance before or during a power shutoff, owners with pump operating septic systems may want to contact their septic system service provider who might be able to assist them in keeping their system functioning.

The majority of septic systems *do not* have pumps and will function properly during a power shutoff.