

# Planting Over a Drain field

Planting over your drain field is recommended because plants help in oxygen exchange and evaporation. However, if you want to use something other than a lawn, you must select the proper plants in order to protect your drain field from damage. Any plant you choose should have non-invasive roots which won't damage or break pipes.

## DO'S:

- Plant small ornamental grasses (not pampas grass!).
- Plant groundcovers.
- Plant small shrubs with noninvasive roots AROUND the drain field (but not on top).
- Select plants that don't need frequent watering. Excessive watering over a drain field reduces its ability to treat wastewater.
- Plant a lawn.

## DONT'S:

- Cover the drain field with plastic or more than one inch of bark mulch.
- Plant a vegetable garden.
- Plant trees or large shrubs closer than 25 to 30 feet.
- Rototill or work soil deeply—system parts may be as little as 6" under the soil.
- Plant anything that will block access to your drain field or septic components.

## PLANTS:

Here is just a sampling of some plants you can use on and around your drain field if you choose not to use a lawn. There are many others, including many perennials you can use to add flowers and color.

### PLANTS FOR SHADE/PARTIAL SHADE OVER DRAINFIELD:

Ajuga  
Bunchberry (Cornus)  
Sweet Woodruff (Galium)  
Wintergreen (Gaultheria procumbens)  
Japanese Spurge (Pachysandra)  
Periwinkle (Vinca)

### PLANTS FOR SHADE/PARTIAL SHADE NEAR DRAINFIELD:

Deer Fern (Blechnum)  
Dwarf Azaleas and Rhododendrons  
Sword Fern (Polystichum)  
Other Ferns  
Japanese Forest Grass (Hakonechloa)  
Lilyturf (Liriope)  
Black Mondo Grass (Ophiopogon)

### PLANTS FOR SUN/PARTIAL SUN OVER DRAINFIELD:

Ajuga  
Kinnikinnik (Arctostaphylos)  
Bearberry (Cotoneaster dammeri)  
Beach Strawberry (Fragaria)  
Blue Star Creeper (Pratia)  
Creeping Rubus (Rubus pentalobus)  
Irish Moss (Sagina)  
Soapwort (Saponaria)  
Sedum  
Creeping Thyme

### PLANTS FOR SUN/PARTIAL SUN NEAR DRAINFIELD:

Dwarf Azaleas & Rhododendrons  
Dwarf Boxwood (Buxus 'Suffruticosa')  
Heather (Calluna & Erica)  
Fescue  
Blue Oat Grass (Helictotrichon)  
Other Ornamental Grasses

