One source of bacterial pollution to our local creeks appears to be pollutants leaking from septic fields. Here is an important checklist for septic system owners to review:

- Do not connect foundation sump pumps or other “clean water” discharges to your septic systems.
- Inspect your septic tanks and any distribution pumps every year. Measure the level of sludge build-up and inspect the baffles for scum. Pump your septic tank at least every 3 years (or sooner as indicated by your annual inspection of the tank).
- Avoid using a garbage disposal.
- Do not pour old medicines or strong cleaning agents down the drain. They will kill beneficial bacteria that break down the waste in your system.
- Keep trees and shrubs at least 35 feet away from your field to prevent roots from plugging or breaking pipes.
- Route surface water drainage and snowmelt away from your absorption field to avoid inundation of your field.
- Locate your absorption field as far away as possible from surface water to reduce its potential of becoming a source of contamination.

Source: Lake Notes, PA Association of Conservation Districts