

Septic mounds are used to increase the separation between the drainfield and saturated soil. To prevent damage, they should be irrigated and disturbed as little as possible. Screening septic mounds presents a unique planting challenge. Native species are ideal, as they require little maintenance. Screening plants will also take up moisture and nutrients from the soil, which may help the septic system function better.

Avoid species that prefer wet soil or have deep roots or tap roots that can damage the system. Limit foot traffic on the mound, and don't irrigate the mound except for minimal hand watering of newly installed plants. The following shallow-rooted native plants should not require supplemental watering if planted in the fall. Woody species should be planted only around the perimeter of the mound, and trees should be set back at least 20' from the edge of the mound. Herbaceous groundcovers are ideal for planting directly on top of the mound as indicated in the list below. Avoid planting over tank covers to ease access for periodic maintenance. When planting on or near a septic mound always wear gloves to reduce contact with the soil, limit compaction and plant areas of exposed soil as soon as possible to minimize erosion.

Species for shady sites		Comments
Goat's beard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	Top of mound okay
Deer fern	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Top of mound okay; evergreen
Bunchberry	<i>Cornus canadensis</i>	Top of mound okay
Bleeding heart	<i>Dicentra formosa</i>	Top of mound okay
Woodland strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Top of mound okay
Salal	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>	Top of mound okay; evergreen
False lily-of-the-valley	<i>Maianthemum dilatatum</i>	Top of mound okay
Indian plum	<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>	Perimeter only
Wood sorrel	<i>Oxalis oregana</i>	Top of mound okay
Sword fern	<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	Top of mound okay; evergreen
Pacific rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i>	Perimeter only; evergreen
Red elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	Perimeter only
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	Perimeter only
Evergreen huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>	Perimeter only; evergreen
Inside-out flower	<i>Vancouveria hexandra</i>	Top of mound okay

Species for sunny sites		Comments
Kinnikinnik	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Top of mound okay; evergreen
Common camas	<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Top of mound okay
Beaked hazelnut	<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Perimeter only
Tufted hairgrass	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Top of mound okay
Coastal strawberry	<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	Top of mound okay; evergreen
Blue elderberry	<i>Sambucus cerulea</i>	Perimeter only
Red elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	Perimeter only
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	Perimeter only