

How to Silence Your Septic Alarm & Shutdown the Pump—Temporarily

When there's a problem with your septic tank pump, the red indicator button on your control box will be lit up and the alarm will be sounding. (See Figure 1.)

1. **Press the lighted red button.** This will temporarily silence the alarm.
2. **Flip the external switch to “Off.”** (Usually that means flipping it from up to down.)

As long as you moderate water usage, you should be fine for a while (a few hours to a day).

Next Steps

Before that next long shower, you need to resolve the issue with your tank pump:

- Has there been a power outage or has STEP been working in the area? You can check each by visiting www.penlight.org/penlight-outage-map-viewer/ or calling Peninsula Light Co. at 877-853-1388 or calling a STEP Board Member.
- You can also try troubleshooting the issue yourself.



Figure 1 Typical septic tank control box with red indicator button (center) and main power switch (bottom right).

Troubleshooting an Alarm



Figure 2 Typical pump controls (top) and circuit breakers (bottom) found inside control box.

1. Flip the external switch to “On” (usually up).
2. Open your septic tank control box.
3. Reset the circuit breakers by flipping them to the “Off” position and then back to the “On” position. (See Figure 2.)
4. Wait a minute to see if the alarm sounds again.
5. If the alarm sounds, silence it by pushing the lighted red button on the outside of the box.
6. Find the toggle switch labeled “Auto/Off/Man” or something similar. (See Figure 2.) Switch that to the “Man” position and listen for pumping sounds. This bypasses the tank float and lets you control the pump directly. **(Important: You cannot leave this toggle switch in the “Man” position, as the pump will never shut off. When you are done troubleshooting, it must be put back in the “Auto” or “Off” position.)**
7. Let the pump run for 15-20 minutes. And then switch the toggle to “Auto.” Monitor the situation.
8. If the alarm sounds again, repeat steps 5 through 7 once.
9. If the alarm sounds again, switch the inside toggle to “Off”, switch the external main switch to “Off,” and call for service, or refer to your system documentation for more involved analyses.
10. Try to moderate your water usage in the house until the system is serviced/repaired.