

ACS Rooter One Explains What Homeowners Should Check Before Choosing a Water Softener

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FORT PIERCE, FL - November 23, 2026 -
ACS Rooter One, a plumbing and septic company, is outlining what to check when deciding whether a water softener is needed in Florida. Homes with septic systems must also consider where softener discharge will go.

A plumbing cleanout, a capped access point on the building sewer, can help a plumber trace the pipe toward the septic tank when assessing the drainage layout. The cleanout does not, by itself, show where the drainfield is located.

Water hardness is another consideration. It measures the concentration of dissolved calcium and magnesium in water and is usually reported in milligrams per liter as calcium carbonate. The United States Geological Survey classifies water as soft at 60 milligrams per liter or less and very hard above 180. Higher mineral concentrations can leave scale inside plumbing and increase the amount of soap needed for cleaning.

Published hardness scales are not identical. The Geological Survey starts its hard range at 121 milligrams per liter, while a Florida Department of Environmental Protection presentation on aquifers starts it at 150 and notes that definitions vary. A reading of 130 is therefore hard on one scale and moderately hard on the other.

A water softener removes calcium and magnesium, the minerals that make water hard. Household softeners use cation exchange, trading those minerals for sodium or potassium, and recharge periodically with salt brine. Each recharge produces salty wastewater that must be directed to an appropriate discharge point.

Fort Pierce Utilities Authority softens shallow-aquifer water with lime and treats deeper Floridan Aquifer water by reverse osmosis, a membrane filtering process. The utility then blends the two, according to its 2026 water quality report. Port St. Lucie Utility Systems describes a similar two-source treatment approach in its 2025 report.

Knowing how a utility treats its water does not reveal the hardness at a home?s tap. The University of Florida?s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences says annual utility water quality reports are available online or on request.

Because those reports may not include a home-specific hardness reading, homeowners can ask their utility for local data or arrange tap water testing.

For private wells, the Florida Department of Health says owners are responsible for their own water?s safety. The University of Florida?s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences suggests private well users have their water tested at a certified laboratory. It also advises anyone buying a softener to test for iron and manganese first, since both reduce the efficiency of cation exchange softeners.

For homes with septic systems, the softener?s drain requires additional planning. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection?s septic owner?s guide advises keeping softener backwash out of the septic system and directing discharge at least 15 feet from both the tank and drainfield.

A licensed plumber or septic contractor can locate the system when permit paperwork is unavailable and evaluate discharge arrangements against applicable local requirements.

Florida has about 2.6 million septic systems, serving roughly 30% of residents, according to a 2026 Florida Senate staff analysis. Parts of St. Lucie County fall within the Indian River Lagoon Protection Program.

Under the program, commercial properties and residential lots of 10 acres or less with existing septic systems must connect to sewer if available or otherwise upgrade to qualifying nitrogen-reducing treatment by July 1, 2030. This requirement is separate from softener installation. The county health department?s septic program

can clarify which properties are covered.

ACS Rooter One says its softener installations begin with an evaluation of a home?s plumbing and water use, along with hardness and mineral testing, to select an appropriately sized system. Installations also include a bypass valve, allowing water to flow around the softener during servicing.

Based in Fort Pierce, ACS Rooter One has served homes and businesses since 1987. The company works across St. Lucie, Martin, Indian River, and Okeechobee counties. Its services include plumbing, septic tank pumping, well pump services, and water softener installation.

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ACS Rooter One

ACS Rooter One specializes in residential and commercial plumbing, including septic tank cleaning and pumping, drain and leach field services, gas line installation, leak detection, & gas appliance installation.

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