

# Session Abstracts

National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)  
71<sup>st</sup> Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition

## Onsite Wastewater Systems

Wednesday, June 20

8:30 – 9:20am

### **Computer Program for Installer Recertification: Development, Implementation, and Evaluation**

*Sam Dunn, RS, EH Specialist II, Arkansas Dept. of Health and Human Services, AR*

In 2005 Arkansas Legislature required training in a digital format for licensed onsite wastewater installers. One challenge was the range of literacy, computer skills, and computer access among the licensed installers. A team was created to develop, evaluate and distribute the instructional program that included information about the legislation, notification procedures, site preparation, storage, septic tanks, hydraulics/electrical, and new products. The user could work at his or her pace to complete the topics. The program was delivered via CD and download from the web. In the evaluation, the installers reported that the program met their needs very well; and, 92% said they wanted a similar quality program in future years. The technological solution met the users' needs as evidenced by low numbers of calls for assistance and positive comments on satisfaction surveys. We will present the systematic development process, demonstrate the features of the instructional program, and present evaluation results.

9:30 – 10:20am

### **Creating a Sustainable Wastewater Management Framework Through Implementation of Decentralized Management Concepts**

*Brent Reagor, RS, Deputy Director, Acton Health Dept., Town of Acton, MA*

The Town of Acton, Massachusetts recently completed a Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan which focused on the strengths of the existing distributed wastewater infrastructure, which includes: 10% of the community served by centralized sewers; 10% of the community served by cluster systems; and 80% of the community served by onsite wastewater systems. The goal of the plan, which was achieved through significant stakeholder involvement, was to create a framework for sustainable water resources management throughout the next 20 years.

This plan, when fully implemented; will not only serve as the foundation for the development of sustainable water resources for the Town of Acton, but will also demonstrate the viability of onsite and decentralized systems as a permanent asset within Acton's water infrastructure.

10:30 – 11:20am

**Computers and Septic Inspections**

*Herbert Yardley, Director/Health Officer, Sussex County Dept. of Health and Human Services, NJ*

The good, the bad, and the ugly—after this presentation, attendees will have a clear understanding of the complexities and complications involved in developing a computer-based septic inspection program. This information will be especially of value for those who are planning to develop data-based septic inspections.

1:00 – 1:50pm

**Performance Decision Tree for Crow Wing County, Minnesota**

*Richard J. Otis, PhD, PE, DEE, Senior Associate, Ayres Associates, WI*

Crow Wing County, in the heart of Minnesota's lakes district, formed a county-wide onsite wastewater treatment system management district in 2006 to ensure that lake water quality is protected against contamination of onsite systems. The District anticipates that compliance inspections will uncover a number of systems that may not have 3 ft of unsaturated soil between the bottom of the system and groundwater as required by current rules. Because replacement areas for such systems may not be available and the costs of replacements may be a significant hardship for some, the District wants to limit the replacements to only those systems that present unacceptable risks, which cannot be reduced effectively through simple modifications. This paper describes a risk assessment procedure that has Ayres Associates has developed to determine which systems may be left in service without undue risks to water quality.

2:00 – 2:50pm

**Instituting Septic System Management in New Jersey**

*Fred H. Bowers, MS, PhD, Research Scientist, New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, NJ*

*Barry Chalofsky, PP, Chief, New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, NJ*

Proper construction of new septic systems is crucial, but septic systems ultimately wear out due to time, overuse, or misuse. Many failures could be prevented by instituting an ongoing maintenance program called the Septic Management Program. Not only would septic management programs prevent or predict failures, they could be employed to encourage the use of advanced technologies that are better than septic systems, provide better water quality, better protect public health, and result in increased longevity and long term cost savings for homeowners.

3:00 – 3:50pm

**Water and Wastewater in Rural America: Meeting Needs Efficiently and Effectively**

*Jim Maras, Deputy Assistant Administrator, USDA, Washington, DC*

The session will provide a general overview of assistance available to rural America through a multitude of USDA, Rural Development programs. A more in-depth focus will

be provided into the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program. The Who, What, Why, When and Where of the program and how it provides water and wastewater in Rural America, meeting needs efficiently and effectively. Federal Government programs are being asked to prove their value through performance measures, see how this emphasis on performance is driving program output and outcomes.

4:00 – 4:50pm

**EPA Update: The Latest from the Office of Wastewater Management**

*Joyce Hudson, Environmental Engineer, Decentralized Program Manager, EPA, Washington, DC*

Abstract not available.