

Trip Report

On Site Waste Water Management/ Cornell Ext. Service
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The conference focused on the municipal management of onsite wastewater systems. Additional presentations discussed alternative waste systems for difficult properties and discussions of federally funded help organizations that help communities establish protocol and implement these management systems.

Currently in central and western and southeastern New York regional watershed boards do much of the management of these private onsite systems. They are responsible for setting policy, scheduled periodic testing of all systems in the watershed, inspecting and approving new and replacement, collecting data, and in some cases enforcement. Much of this was out of the scope of the Town of Inlet. But, some of their practices should be considered by the town. One of note is inspection of all onsite systems on deed transfer. This would allow the town an opportunity to identify and seek correction of failing systems. Note: correction is to be on failing systems NOT out of compliance systems

Probably the most interesting to the author were discussions on alternative or innovative onsite systems. The case studies presented were typical of Inlet, lakeside cottages (camps) and/or steep terrain. Systems included aerobic and inoculation systems. These appear to be alternatives to areas outside the immediate business district of the town. The down side is the systems require routine professional maintenance and semiannual inspections. If many of these are installed, the town would have to review staffing to cover these inspections. The downside of many of these alternative systems is they address environmental concerns only. The presenter did acknowledged later that all cases presented were on public water. They strictly adhere to the 100-ft. rule for drinking wells. Another alternative for cluster homes such as we have on 6th, 7th Lakes and the rental cottages on 4th Lake are distributed systems. These are standalone systems to service 5-10 residences. They are typically owned by the landowners and maintained by contract with local service providers. This is an alternative that allows for only those in need to bear the economic burden.

The later part of the afternoon was dedicated to presentations by federally funded nonprofit organizations whose mission is to assist communities in establishing community wastewater treatment program. Although many of these are geared towards larger focuses such as whole watersheds or counties, initial discussions with one organization-RCAP Solutions appeared they many be able to assist Inlet. They focus on small communities such as hamlets and villages. They are a facilitation group that assist communities in defining their needs, recommending consultants that review the needs and recommend a program that often consists a mix of systems as they fit the community. The author will contact the Lake Placid office to get more information and perhaps a presentation to the Clean Waters Committee.

