



Help Available for Septic System Repairs

Residents in several areas of Orange County have become eligible for reimbursement of 50% of the expense of maintaining, repairing or replacing on-lot septic systems.

Funding provided by the Commonwealth which supports implementation of the Upper York Watershed TMDL implementation plan and which is administered by the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District is available in the following watersheds: Mountain Run (Gordonsville); Pamunkey Creek; Terry's Run and Beaver Creek. This is nearly all of the section of Orange county South of Route 20 and east of US 15 except for very small areas along the county border with Spotsylvania and Louisa Counties.

The goal of the programs is to lessen the real or potential pollutant loads from ailing, failing or non-existent septic systems that enter groundwater or surface water in these areas.

One particular pollutant, fecal coliform bacteria, or E. coli, has been identified as being higher than expected by state water quality standards although other pollutants can also be involved. Program participants are eligible for several different payments depending on the actual needs of their system. Reimbursement payments are typically 50% although they can go as high as 75% for individuals that qualify for low-income status.

Maximum payments to property owners with average income levels are \$150 maximum towards a pump out and inspection; \$3000 maximum towards a repair; \$4000 maximum towards a conventional system or \$4500 if a pump is required to move the liquids to a drainfield; and \$10,000 maximum towards an alternative engineered system.

Pump outs and inspections are encouraged and if further repairs are indicated the owner is still eligible for the repair payments. Applications are required and need to be approved prior to the work being done or funding can be declined. Funding is available on a first come, first serve basis. Free assistance with initial assessments of individual system needs is available from the District. Information on the program, if your address is in the eligible areas or how to tell if your system may need help, is available from the District by calling 540-948-7531 or 540-825-8591.