

ATTENTION NEWS EDITOR:

PLEASE PUBLISH FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Waushara County Zoning Department will again begin notifying many County residents by mail that it is time to have their POWTS (Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System) or septic system maintenance verification completed. Notices will be sent on or around March 15th and owners will be given until June 15th to have the required maintenance completed.

The monitoring of the septic systems by the County is required by State law and is not optional. Changes adopted by Wisconsin Legislature in 2005 necessitated changes to the state plumbing code (COMM 83.225) that mandate all septic systems located in the County must be inventoried and notices sent to the owners informing them of the POWTS Inventory maintenance regulations.

The purpose of proper septic system maintenance is to protect the health and safety of State residents and to protect the ground and surface waters of the state. Continued inspection and maintenance of a septic system is important to make sure that the wastewater from your home or other structure is being treated properly and to identify septic systems when they are not functioning correctly. When a failing septic system contaminates surface or drinking water, it can affect many more people than just the owner of the septic system. A properly maintained septic system may also prolong the life expectancy of the system and can reduce the need for costly repairs and replacement, which become more likely if the system isn't maintained on a regular basis.

Waushara County is home to many seasonal residents and vacation homes with limited use. The state mandate does not differentiate between systems that are used continually, seasonally, or not at all. Systems with infrequent or no use can still be vulnerable to damage from Wisconsin winters and vehicular traffic. If there is a septic system on the property, it is required to be maintained.

The new code provisions require all septic systems, regardless of age, to be visually inspected and pumped, if necessary, by a licensed service provider to verify the condition of the system at least once every three years. Due to the volume of systems in the county we are sequentially phasing additional systems into the program each year. If a landowner does not receive a notice this year, they may be notified next year, or their system may not yet be entered into the program. Landowners who'd like to be added to the program at this time may contact the Waushara County Zoning Department for information and a verification form.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the maintenance program requirements, please, contact the Waushara County Zoning Department at (920) 787-0453 or lcdzoning.courthouse@co.waushara.wi.us. It is helpful if landowners have their verification notice (if they have one), their property address, and permit # or approximate date of septic installation when they call. Additional information regarding the septic system maintenance program, including **provider lists** and **frequently asked questions and answers** is available in the Zoning office or at the department link at www.co.waushara.wi.us.com.