



Public Health

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May 2007

Dear Homeowner,

I am writing to each of the owners of over 14,000 households in Boulder County with a septic system. We need your help to protect and preserve the quality of our water resources here in Boulder County. We have been gathering and analyzing septic system and water quality information for the last several years and believe that it is imperative we act in order to assure we protect our water quality now, and for future generations.

In an effort to prevent disease outbreaks and contamination of our waterways, BCPH is proposing to launch **SepticSmart**, a countywide program aimed at improving the health of our county's septic systems and water. This program would require actions by the County and by you.

Tackling an issue before it becomes a serious health problem is smart...and it is a challenge for all of us. We have met with many public and private stakeholders over the last year to help us to design a program. With **SepticSmart**, we are proposing a program that incorporates ideas and recommendations from our communities, and that will be effective in protecting our watershed. We are now asking for your feedback on what we have proposed. Here's an overview of what you'll see in the proposed SepticSmart program:

Education - Living with a Septic System. Maintaining a healthy, functioning septic system keeps your home and family safe from contaminated water and can add value to your home. The **SepticSmart** program will provide you with the information you need about what is best left out of sinks, drains, and toilets, and how simple steps can be taken to keep your system in tip-top shape.

Status – Finding out about YOUR System. The **SepticSmart** program will help you to **Check** the status of your septic system and, if necessary, get a **Permit** for any needed repairs, **Update** your system by completing any needed repairs, and get final **Approval**. Just like your foundation or roof, a healthy, approved septic system can add value to your home, while a failing system can be a liability.

Community – Protecting OUR Watershed. A **SepticSmart** program goal is to have all unapproved systems in Boulder County meet 21st Century standards in the next 15 years. To do this we need to develop a means for assessing current and future septic systems to ensure that they are adequate. One proposal is to develop a property transfer regulation. This would require septic systems to be inspected and assure that they have been approved.

Check. Permit. Update. Approve.



Land Use – When a Home Gets Bigger. The **SepticSmart** program will improve education about a current regulation that requires that properties needing a Land Use Department review or building permit must also ensure that the septic system is adequate or upgraded to meet the possible increased demands on the system.

What will this mean for you?

It means you will need to be **SepticSmart** and know the status of your system. It will take a little of your time to check into your septic system status. Not only will this require your attention and action, but possibly an investment as well, should your septic system need adjustments or repair in order to meet standards protective of water quality.

You can start now by going to our website www.SepticSmart.org/check to CHECK your system's permit status.

The **SepticSmart** program includes several proposed strategies to address septic systems in Boulder County. One of the most significant strategies is a **proposed property transfer regulation**. It would require homeowners to have an inspection of the septic system to determine if it meets nationally established criteria and has been approved by Boulder County. Just like inspecting a roof or electrical system before buying a house, buyers and sellers would need to make sure the septic system is in good working condition, and meets current approved county standards. We need your input on this and other strategies.

Your input is needed to assure we develop a successful program. In the coming months we will be hosting community open houses, community meetings with our Board of Health, providing information in the newspaper and by mail, as well as providing a place for you to give input on our web site – www.SepticSmart.org. Please check our website for times and locations of open houses convenient to you. In the meantime if you would like more information, please see the enclosed brochure, or call our Hotline at 1-877-462-2911.

As life continues in your current home, or you consider expanding, buying or selling a house, please make sure you have considered the health of the septic system—we are counting on you to help maintain clean, healthy water in Boulder County. So please visit www.SepticSmart.org as the next step to protecting environmental health and ensuring the health of your septic system.

Sincerely,



Charles L. Stout, MPH
Public Health Director

Check. Permit. Update. Approve.

