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February 2011 e-News

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Help NOWRA spread the word!

If you know of anyone not receiving the NOWRA e-News, please forward this on and have the request to join our mailing list.

Who is the Best Backhoe Operator in the Industry?

You can find out (or try to prove that you're that person) by participating in the NOWRA National Backhoe Roe-D-Hoe, to be held at the 2011 Pumper Show in Louisville, KY, March 2-5, 2011. For a small \$5 entry fee, contestants will have the chance to try their hand at accomplishing a series of tasks intended to demonstrate the person's ability to operate a backhoe quickly and with precision. In past years, events have included shooting a basket, chipping a golf ball into a cup, or picking up a spare by knocking down bowling pins. What will be the events in 2011? The only way to know is to come to the Pumper Show!

The grand prize for the competition is \$1,000, so there's a lot at stake! The competition will be open to all participants on Thursday and Friday of the Pumper Show (March 3-4), and you may enter and try your hand more than once. The top five finalists from the first two days of competition will then compete on Saturday, March 5th to see who gets to take home the grand prize and wear the Roe-D-Hoe Championship Belt.

NOWRA's Septic Locator connect you with a wastewater professional in your area and our membership list.

2011 GOLD BUSINESS BENEFIT MEMBERS:

Bio-Microbics, Inc.

913-422-0707

<http://www.biomicrobics.com>

Infiltrator Systems, Inc.

860-577-7106

<http://www.infiltratorsystems.com>

Onsite Installer

800-994-7990

<http://www.onsiteinstaller.com>

Presby Environmental

800-473-5298

<http://www.presbyenvironmental.com>

Details on the Pumper Show can be found here
<http://www.pumpershow.com/>

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Onsite Wastewater Summit with NOWRA, NEHA and SORA Set for June 17-20 in Columbus, OH

Mark your calendar for the upcoming Onsite Wastewater Summit – the “superconference” hosted by NOWRA, NEHA and SORA. This first-of-its kind event will be held at the Hyatt Regency Columbus and the adjoining Greater Columbus Convention Center, June 17-20, 2011.

Planned features of the Summit include the following:

- *June 18-19 – Two education tracks drawn from nearly 50 abstracts submitted by industry practitioners
- *June 18-19 – Wastewater Alley – a dedicated section of the exhibit hall where the industry’s providers of onsite products and services will have stands. This is likely to be the single largest gathering of industry vendors in 2011.
- *June 19 – A competitively priced one-day contractor track featuring a combination of dedicated exhibit hall time and education sessions designed specifically for installers, service providers and O&M professionals
- *June 19 – An "Onsite Jeopardy" competition for installers, other contractors and regulators. Test your knowledge about our industry and win cash prizes!
- *June 17 – A field trip to onsite-related locations in central Ohio

The cost to attend the Onsite Wastewater Summit will be \$395 for NOWRA members and affiliated state organizations; \$545 for non-members. Members of NEHA, their state affiliates, and SORA members may also attend for \$395.

Full details and registration information for the Onsite Wastewater Summit should be available shortly. Watch the NOWRA website for additional details. We will also send you an email when the full information is available.

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Make a Difference! Participate on a NOWRA Committee!

NOWRA is looking for a few good men (and women!) to serve on its committees. Can we count on you to step up? In addition to expertise in a particular area, enthusiasm and a willingness to help NOWRA are the most important characteristics we look for in committee members.

NOWRA has slots available for the following committees:

- Marketing & Communications – Responsible for developing effective communications and promotional strategies for the association, including membership recruitment and retention and the NOWRA website
- Education – Responsible for advancing member education through the Annual Conference, state programs, workshops, manuals, distance learning, etc.
- Annual Conference -- Provide overall leadership in development and implementation of the Annual Conference in coordination with local affiliates
- External Relations -- Build relationships and establish effective communication with various related organizations, agencies, etc. including WEF, EPA and MOU Partnership, NAHB, NSF, NEHA, SORA, and environmental groups such as Clean Water Action, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, etc.
- Government Relations -- Establish and facilitate effective communication with local, state, and federal regulatory officials and monitor strategies and activities. Also build a industry-wide coalition for lobbying at a national level.
- Model Code - Promote the adoption of performance-based rules and other regulatory reforms that achieve sound system management and management of risks to human health and the environment
- Technical Practices - Define and promote good design and management practices in the application of decentralized wastewater treatment systems.

More information about each committee [can be found here, along with an application to volunteer for a particular committee](#). The need is especially great for volunteers willing to serve on the Marketing & Communications Committee.

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Thanks to Members of the Education and Technical Practices Committees!

Sometimes we forget to say thanks to those who serve on NOWRA's committees, regardless of how much we appreciate what they do. The Education Committee is one of NOWRA's most active committees and their role in developing curriculum and reviewing papers submitted to them has been tremendously valuable. Current members of the Education Committee include:

Sara Heger, Chair
Jim Converse
Nancy Deal
Tom Groves
Jan Hygnstrom
Ted Loudon

John Thomas
David Lindbo
John R. Buchanan
Judith Sims
George Loomis
Randy Miles
Craig Gilbertson

A special note of appreciation goes to Sara Heger for her long service as chair of this committee. Sara steps down as chair following the conclusion of the Pumper Show. Bob Rubin, professor emeritus at NC State University, will succeed Sara as Education Committee chair.

Another very active committee is Technical Practices. This group has recently been involved in projects as diverse as helping to develop the NOWRA homeowner folder to reviewing the impact of water softeners on septic tanks to creating an checklist for contractors when installing onsite systems. Current members of the committee include:

Alison Blodig, chair
Michael Hines
Jerry Stonebridge
Tom Fritts
Bob Mayer
Stephens Consulting Service
Jill Hass
Collin Bishop
Matt Byers
Dennis Hallahan
Kevin Sherman
Randy Miles
Dick Otis
Bob Pickney
Rodney Ruskin

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From IOWWA -- IOWWA Begins Site Maintenance Grant Work

(Reprinted with permission from the Iowa Onsite Wastewater Association Newsletter)

During two decades of growth in rural and suburban housing markets, demand grew for a variety on onsite wastewater technology options. Nationwide, the training of maintenance providers to service all the different types of systems has not kept up.

Iowa is one of the only states requiring perpetual maintenance of proprietary onsite equipment. A statewide need exists for a maintenance training

program and curriculum for those working in the industry. Specific manufacturers might train local contractors to install their equipment, but if those businesses close, there can be no one to service the system.

This fall IOWWA was awarded a \$100,000 USDA Technical Assistance and Training grant to develop maintenance training materials. These will target maintenance providers statewide who are finding that more of their work involves the installation and maintenance of higher technology onsite wastewater systems. This audience includes several hundred people representing every county in Iowa.

IOWWA believes that states will continue to enact perpetual maintenance regulations. Our efforts to put a well-developed training package in place now could benefit them in the future. Also in Iowa, USDA Rural Development funded the creation of five community-wide systems that utilize onsite technology; the management organizations of these systems will be able to take advantage of our maintenance curriculum materials. County regulatory personnel and homeowners also can avail themselves to our materials to learn what is expected of maintenance providers.

What Will Happen

In the past few years IOWWA has installed a wide variety of the wastewater treatment systems and technologies at the Habitat for Humanity site near Waverly. Equipment, materials and supplies were donated by manufacturers and local contractors, and local contractor members of IOWWA provided free labor and services. As part of IOWWA's contract with Habitat, IOWWA has unlimited access to all sites at all times for maintenance and training uses. Thus, this location is ideal for development of a maintenance program with the various manufacturers of the diverse onsite equipment.

All of these systems require a higher level of management than a traditional soil absorption system.

To verify that selected systems are performing and to aid in curriculum development, IOWWA will be doing effluent sampling that exceeds regulatory requirements of the Iowa DNR, National Sanitation Foundation and those recommended/required by the various manufacturers. Semi-annual grab samples fulfill state requirements. IOWWA plans to sample monthly for a year to show seasonal and system variations. The training curriculum will show how to carry out required/recommended maintenance and sampling. While manufacturers provide individual training on their equipment, none has created a generally usable curriculum.

The curriculum will include video clips of actual maintenance functions on each system, and equipment manufacturers will be working closely with the organization. An electronic telemetry system will be developed on the demonstration site to enhance the system maintenance and sampling capabilities and demonstrate the effectiveness of remote telemetry. The effective use of remote telemetry is a relatively new technology and IOWWA wants contractors to train for this maintenance method.

Brent Parker, who recently retired from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, was instrumental in the grant application and now will lead curriculum development. Bob McKinney, River to River Onsite Septic Solutions, will be responsible for sampling, maintenance and troubleshooting activities of the systems utilized.

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The Latest from WERF

The Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) and its partners on the Decentralized Water Resources Collaborative (DWRC) have published over a dozen new decentralized related research products in the last six months. All the products are available for download at no charge from the DWRC website: www.decentralizedwater.org. Also, please visit WERF's decentralized knowledge area at www.werf.org/decentralized for the latest research news and updates.

Products published since July are noted below:

- NDWRCDP Summary Research and Outreach Materials
- International Issues and Innovations in Integrated and Decentralized Water Resource Infrastructure
- Performance and Costs for Decentralized Unit Processes
- Long-term Study on Landscape Irrigation Using Household Graywater – Experimental Study (Phase 2)
- Non-Governmental Organizations: Enhancing Their Role in Advancing the New Water Infrastructure Paradigm
- Integration: A New Framework and Strategy for Water Management in Cities and Towns
- Performance Dynamics of Trace Organic Chemicals in Onsite Treatment Units and Systems
- Development of Design Criteria for Denitrifying Treatment Wetlands
- Nitrogen Removal and Sustainability of Vertical Flow Constructed Wetlands for Small-Scale Wastewater Treatment: Recommendations for Improvements
- Improving the Efficacy of Wastewater Polishing Reed Beds
- Decentralized Stormwater Techniques: Training and Dissemination
- When to Consider Distributed Systems in an Urban and Suburban Context
- Evaluation of the Potential for Methane Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from Septic Systems

One product WERF would like to highlight is "Performance and Cost of Decentralized Unit Processes". This series of fact sheets can help small community leaders and planners evaluate the performance, cost, and other factors of technologies and decide which are most appropriate for their needs.

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Archived Webinars on Decentralized Wastewater System Design & Management - Available for Use

The recently completed 6-part webinar series on individual and clustered (decentralized) wastewater system design and management has been archived for future use, at no charge, by the Watershed Leadership Program at Purdue University.

Users may download the webcasts at their convenience to view the slides and hear the synchronized presentations by visiting <https://engineering.purdue.edu/~iwla/webinars/wastewater2010/index.html>. The material will be posted on the site for at least the next 24 months, and may be linked to other web sites without prior notice.

The series includes a range of topics, including wastewater treatment processes and technologies, system design, management approaches, and integrating decentralized systems into a broader water resource management paradigm that includes drinking water, groundwater, stormwater, and the protection and restoration of surface waters (see table below for topics list). The written questions submitted during the webinars – along with the responses provided by the speakers – are also posted at the site.

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News From Around the Nation

Florida: Septic Tank Inspection Law Implementation Delayed. As one of its first acts in its new session, the Florida Legislature passed legislation which will delay implementation for six months of a law passed by the same body last year to require all of the state's 2.1 million septic tanks to be inspected every five years. The new legislation is expected to provide sufficient time for legislators to repeal or amend the rules in response to public concerns about the financial burden places on citizens. [More:](#)

Missouri: Attorney General calls for action to protect Lake of the Ozarks. Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster recently released a report outlining a series of recommendations for protecting water quality at the Lake of the Ozarks. The report makes 12 recommendations, including creation of a regional sewer district, increasing the number of water quality inspectors and monitoring water quality better. [More:](#)

Maryland: Governor Proposes Ban on Septic Systems in Large Developments. During his State of the Union message, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley urged lawmakers to ban septic systems in major new housing developments in order to further the state's goal of cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. The statement surprised many lawmakers and generated strong reactions across a wide cross-section of interests, including the onsite systems industry. Legislation backing the governor's recommendation (House Bill 1107) has been introduced in the Maryland General Assembly. Both MOWPA and NOWRA are in the process of responding to these developments. [More:](#)



About NOWRA

The National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (NOWRA) is the largest organization within the U.S. dedicated solely to educating and representing members within the onsite and decentralized industry. NOWRA has Affiliates, with constituent groups throughout the U.S. and Canada.

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