

A large, rectangular concrete wastewater treatment tank is shown under construction in a deep trench. The tank has a grey concrete finish and several circular access points on top, some with green covers. A black pipe is visible on the surface. The surrounding area is filled with brown soil and rocks.

EPA's Decentralized Wastewater Program Update Onsite Mega Conference November 1, 2022

Presentation Outline

- EPA Decentralized Program Background/ Overview
- Decentralized Wastewater MOU Partnership
- Program/ Partnership Priorities
- SepticSmart Week
- Clean Water State Revolving Fund/ Decentralized Wastewater Guide
- Decentralized Wastewater Workforce
- Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative

Disclaimer: The materials in this presentation do NOT reflect the opinions of NOWRA

Decentralized Program Background/ Overview

- 1997 Report to Congress on Decentralized Systems in the U.S.
 - Primary Finding: Decentralized systems can provide the same level of treatment, and may be less expensive than centralized wastewater (sewer) treatment
- Early 2000s: Decentralized Program created including issuance of many guidance documents, and MOU Partnership
- Our program provides non-regulatory program support focused on outreach tools for homeowners, counties and states

Decentralized Wastewater MOU Partnership



Program/ Partnership Priorities

- 1) Increase outreach and public education** to ensure decentralized wastewater and septic systems are properly maintained to protect water quality and human health
- 2) Identify and utilize current information and data** on the use and performance of decentralized wastewater and septic systems in the US
- 3) Promote the benefits of advanced decentralized treatment technologies** within the wastewater industry and to the public
- 4) Share information on funding sources and pursue innovative public and private financing options** to help communities and homeowners replace, upgrade, or maintain decentralized wastewater systems
- 5) Expand mechanisms to address workforce, education, training, and research needs** related to the decentralized wastewater industry to improve future sustainability

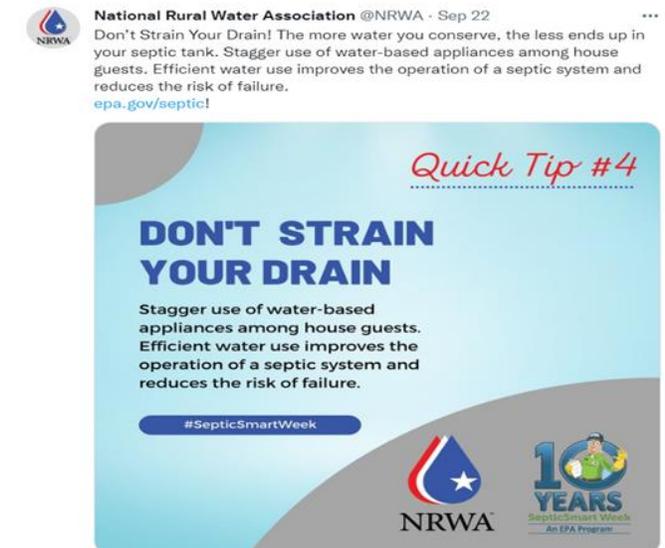
SepticSmart Week

- Annual outreach event to support the proper operation and care of septic systems
- 10-year anniversary this year (Sept 19 – 23, 2022)
- All education materials available at www.epa.gov/septic



SepticSmart Week 2022: New and Noteworthy

- Highlights include
 - Over 350 unique hashtags for #SepticSmart and #SepticSmartWeek
 - Over 800,000 impressions across Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter



Proclamations Declared in 2022

- We received a total of 13 proclamations from Michigan, North Carolina, New Mexico, Washington, Missouri, and a first ever proclamation from Barnstable County, Massachusetts, as well as MOU partners- ASTHO, GWPC, IAPMO, NAWT, NOWRA, NRWA, and RCAP.



MOU Partner Op-Eds and Blog Posts

- IAPMO, NSF, RCAP and ASTHO, wrote SepticSmart-themed blog posts.



News Media

- 5 Press Releases and Newscasts
- 5 Local Media Publications
- SepticSmart reached local publications across the country
 - Laconia, NH, Jefferson County, CO, McLean County, IL, North Carolina, Texas and Washington State

WE WANT YOUR CAR! We'll buy your car even if you don't buy a new one.
✓ ANY MAKE, ANY MODEL ✓ WE PAY TOP DOLLAR
✓ NO STRINGS ATTACHED ✓ GET CASH SAME

Septic systems – out of sight, out of mind

By JACQUELYN BELLEFONTAINE LAKE WINNIPESAUKEE ASSOCIATION Sep 16, 2022 Updated Sep 22, 2022 0

Top 10 Ways to Be a Good Septic Owner

- ✓ Have your system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to your state's local health department's recommendations.
- ✓ Have your septic tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years.
- ✓ Avoid pouring harsh products (e.g., oil, grease, chemicals, paint, medications) down the drain.
- ✓ Discard non-degradable products in the trash (e.g., tires, disposable wires, car tires) instead of flushing them.
- ✓ Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank.
- ✓ Follow the system manufacturer's directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives.

JEFFERSON COUNTY COLORADO Public Health

ABOUT US RECORDS & STATISTICS CLINIC SERVICES PROGRAMS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

This document. (Courtesy image)

Home » News Flash

Public Health - News

Posted on: September 19, 2022

Jefferson County Public Health recognizes SepticSmart Week

Jefferson County, Colo. — Whether it's eating broccoli, going to the dentist or getting a physical, we all know there are things we must do to take care of ourselves and the systems in our body. When we don't take care of our bodies, they don't work the way they are supposed to. Our homes and buildings are no different.

Sept. 19-23, 2022 is SepticSmart Week, an annual event focused on educating homeowners and communities on the proper care and maintenance of their septic systems (also known as onsite wastewater treatment systems). This SepticSmart week, JCPH wants to make sure all the onsite wastewater treatment system owners in the county have a full set of tools in their toolbox to be good septic owners.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) defines a septic system as an underground wastewater treatment structure, commonly used in rural areas without centralized sewer systems. They use a combination of nature and proven technology to treat wastewater from all household plumbing, such as that from bathrooms, kitchen drains and laundry. A well-maintained onsite wastewater treatment system, just like every other system

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Spotlight: Greene County, MO



- Missouri Smallflows Organization (MSO) hosted an Educational Day at the Springfield Onsite Wastewater Demonstration Center
- The Greene County Commission issued a proclamation on Wednesday, Sept. 21, to kickoff Septic Smart Week, hosted by the Missouri Smallflows Organization (MSO) at the county's Onsite Wastewater Demonstration Facility in north Springfield.
- Water Quality Field Operations Mgr. Michael Bowers, from the Greene County Resource Management Dept., gave a demonstration on how a variety of home septic systems function.

First Ever SepticSmart Photo Challenge

- EPA's Decentralized Wastewater Program hosted its first ever photo challenge.
- 12 Participants; 3 Winners; 1 Honorable Mention



Educational Materials – Quick Tips

Don't Strain Your Drain!



Use water efficiently and stagger use of water-based appliances (such as a washing machine) to avoid a back up of your septic system into your house. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Shield Your Field!



Tree and shrub roots, cars, and livestock can damage your drainfield. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Protect It and Inspect It!



Regular septic system maintenance can save homeowners thousands of dollars and protect public health. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Think at the Sink!



What goes down your drain has a big impact on your septic system. Avoid harsh chemicals and use cleaners/detergents in moderation. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Don't Overload the Commode!



A toilet is not a trashcan. Disposable diapers and wipes, feminine hygiene products, cigarette butts, cat litter and much more can damage your septic system. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Keep it Clean!



If you have a well, many things can contaminate your drinking water, such as a failing septic system. Test your well water regularly. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Pump Your Tank!



Ensure your septic tank is pumped at regular intervals as recommended by a professional and/or local permitting authority. Learn more at www.epa.gov/septic.



Educational Materials – Quick Tip videos



A routine inspection will measure the thickness of top level scum or grease, and bottom solids. This will show how well sewage is passing through the



1 in 5

Households in the U.S. depend on septic systems to treat their wastewater.

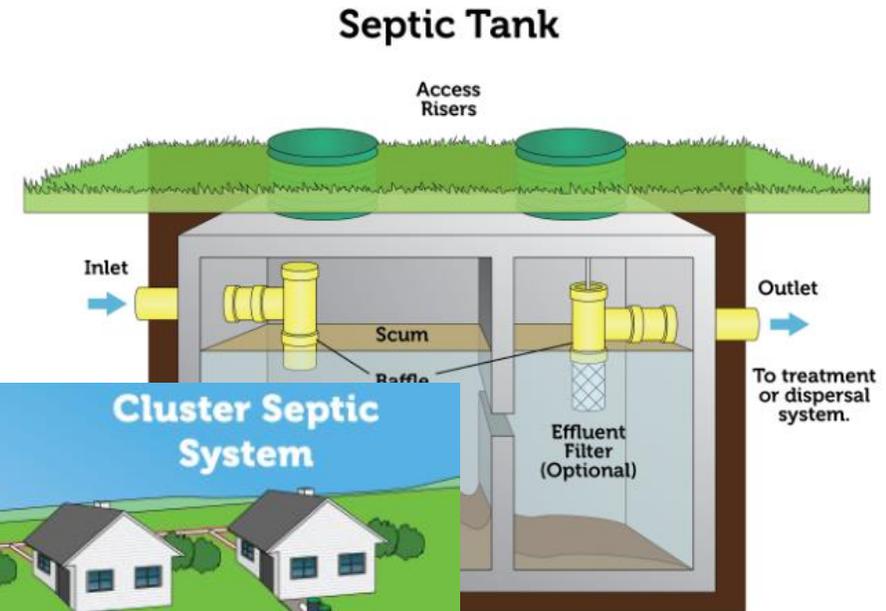
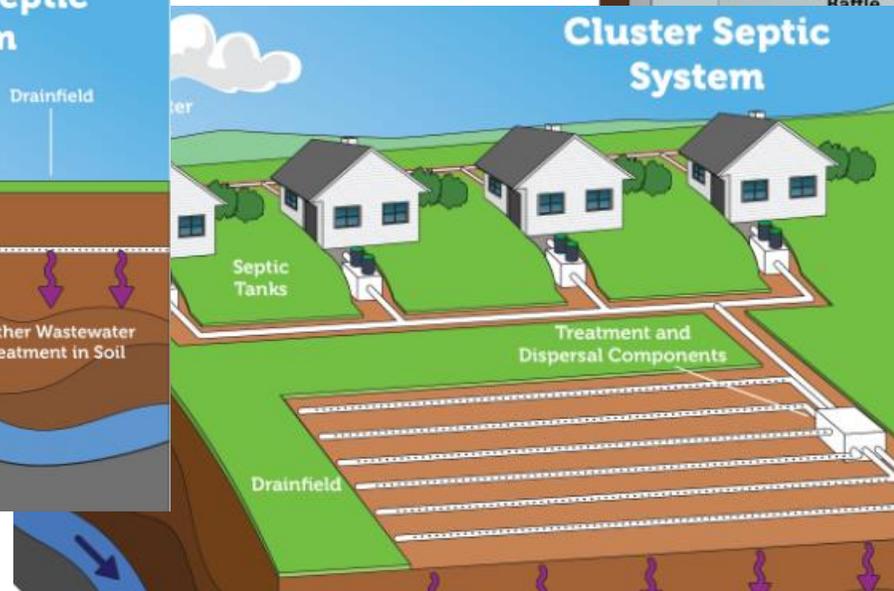
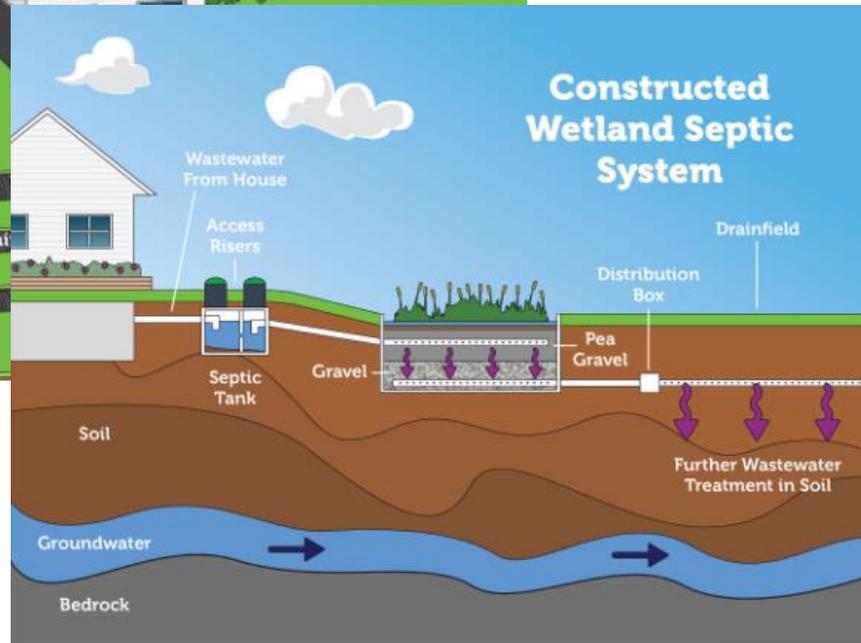
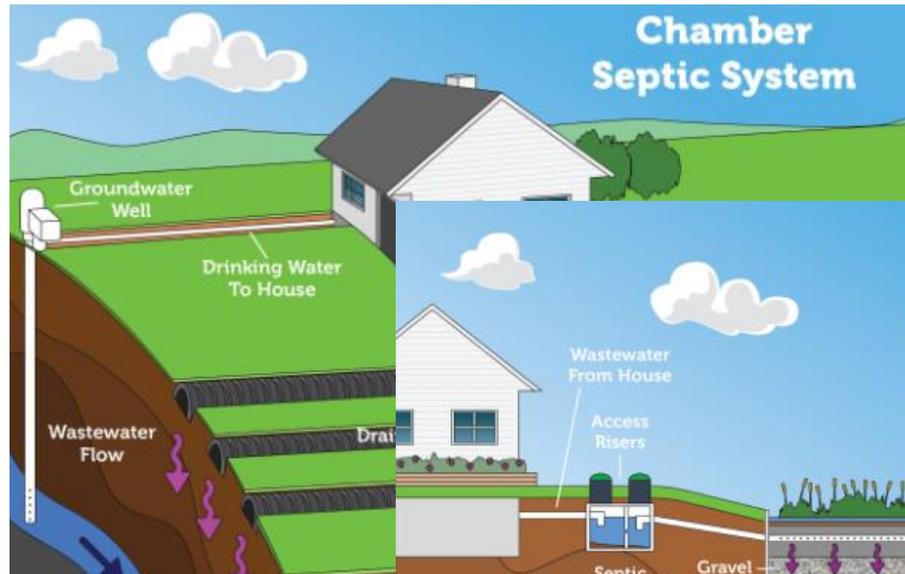
EPA



Watch on  YouTube

Share 

Educational Materials - Diagrams



Educational Materials – brochures, posters, other

BE SEPTICSMART
THINK AT THE SINK

OK DOWN THE DRAIN
 The following can go down a commercial kitchen drain in limited quantities.

- CLEANING PRODUCTS**
Follow manufacturer's instructions
- DISHWATER**
Wipe off large food remnants/grease
- WASH WATER FROM PRODUCE**
Brush off dirt before rinsing fruits and vegetables

NOT OK DOWN THE DRAIN
 The following cannot go down the drain as they can clog pipes and/or damage septic systems.

- FOOD WASTE**
Limit food waste by disposing of any excess waste
- CHEMICALS**
Avoid pouring harsh chemicals down the drain
- GREASE/FAT**
Dispose of excess grease in a receptacle or container
- GARBAGE DISPOSAL**
Properly dispose of food debris and limit using a garbage disposal

Limit what you pour down the drain.
 Remember, anything other than water can impact your septic system.

Do Your Part, Be SepticSmart

To protect this home's plumbing, please keep grease, fats, and harmful chemicals out of the drain.

¡No recargue el drenaje!

Sea eficiente: los aparatos que funcionan con agua (como la lavadora de ropa) deben usarse uno por uno para evitar recargar el sistema séptico de su casa. Obtenga más información en www.epa.gov/septic.

Do Your Part. Be SepticSmart!

Shield Your Field
 Divert rain and surface water away and avoid parking vehicles and planting trees on your drainfield.

Don't Overload the Commode
 Don't flush diapers, wipes or other items meant for a trashcan down the toilet.
 Toilet paper only

Think at the Sink
 Limit use of your garbage disposal and avoid pouring fats, grease, solids and harsh chemicals down the drain.

Don't Strain Your Drain
 Use water efficiently and stagger use of water-based appliances, such as your washing machine or dishwasher.

Protect It and Inspect It
 A typical septic system should be serviced every one to three years by a septic service professional.

Pump Your Tank
 Ensure your septic tank is pumped at regular intervals as recommended by a professional.

Keep It Clean
 If you are on a well, test your drinking water regularly to ensure it remains clean and free of contamination.

Groundwater Recharge

Drainfield

Septic Tank

Well

Aquifer

EPA
 830-F-180-03 | May 2018

Financing Decentralized Systems with the CWSRF

EPA Publication #888-888-888
Draft November 2021

EPA
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

FINANCING DECENTRALIZED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

Pathways to Success with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program



Clean Water
State Revolving Fund



Financing Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems

INTRODUCTION

Approximately one in five households in the United States rely on decentralized wastewater systems, such as single-family home septic systems or community cluster systems, for wastewater treatment and disposal. For communities relying on decentralized systems,

costs to repair, replace, or install systems can be expensive, and these costs are often the homeowner's responsibility. EPA's [Financing Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems: Pathways to Success with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program](#) Guide helps community leaders, local and state decentralized

wastewater treatment programs and state Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) administrators understand how the CWSRF can be a viable source of financing for decentralized systems.

The Guide details (1) the CWSRF Program; (2) How to Use the CWSRF to Finance Decentralized System Projects; (3) Options for CWSRF Loan Repayment; and (4) Initiating a Financing Program for Decentralized Wastewater Systems with the CWSRF. This summary sheet highlights key content from these sections.

1 The CWSRF Program

EPA's CWSRF Program, administered individually by each state and Puerto Rico, provides low-cost financing for wastewater infrastructure and water quality projects, including decentralized wastewater system projects. The CWSRF functions like an environmental infrastructure bank, providing funding, primarily in the form of below-market interest rate loans to eligible borrowers. However, it is important to note that States are afforded extensive flexibility in administering their program, including defining project and applicant eligibilities, financing terms, and loan forgiveness options for qualified borrowers. Contact your state for [details](#).

CWSRF Financing Fundamentals



Is my project eligible for CWSRF funding?

- Planning and design
- Construction
- CWSRF CANNOT pay for *operations and maintenance* (O&M)

Your state's CWSRF staff can help you understand what costs may/may not be included in a CWSRF loan.



What kinds of projects are eligible?

- New septic system installation
- Repair/replacement projects
- Converting cesspools to septic
- Cluster systems or community package plants
- Certain fees associated with setting up a special district or a Responsible Management Entity



Am I eligible to apply?

- The CWSRF may lend to:
- Communities, municipalities, townships, counties, political subdivisions
 - Individual homeowners
 - Citizen groups
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Public utility companies



What terms are available?

- Within statutory limits, state CWSRF programs have a great deal of flexibility to offer borrowers, including leeway with:
- Interest rate and repayment loans
 - Limited amounts of loan forgiveness
 - Sculpted repayment structures to accommodate borrower cash flows

Check with staff in your state about how a CWSRF loan can be customized to fit your needs.

- New guide (left) promotes best practices for communities to access CWSRF for decentralized wastewater systems, including funding mechanisms and a step-by-step implementation plan.
- Fact sheet (right) offers an abbreviated version of the guide .

Decentralized Wastewater Workforce



Pipeline to a Sustainable Workforce:

A Report on Decentralized/
Onsite Wastewater Occupations

EPA Office of Wastewater Management
February 2021



Document Number: EPA-830-R-21-001



Education and Training Landscape:

Providing a Supply of Talent for
Decentralized/Onsite Wastewater Occupations

EPA Office of Wastewater Management
September 2021



Document Number: EPA-830-R-21-005



Building a Decentralized Wastewater Training Program

EPA Office of Wastewater Management

September 2021



Document Number: EPA-830-R-21-002

Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative

News Releases: [Headquarters](#) | [Water \(OW\)](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Launches EPA- USDA Partnership to Provide Wastewater Sanitation to Underserved Rural Communities

Historic Funding from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Will Help Address
Lack of Basic Wastewater Infrastructure in Rural America

August 2, 2022

Contact Information

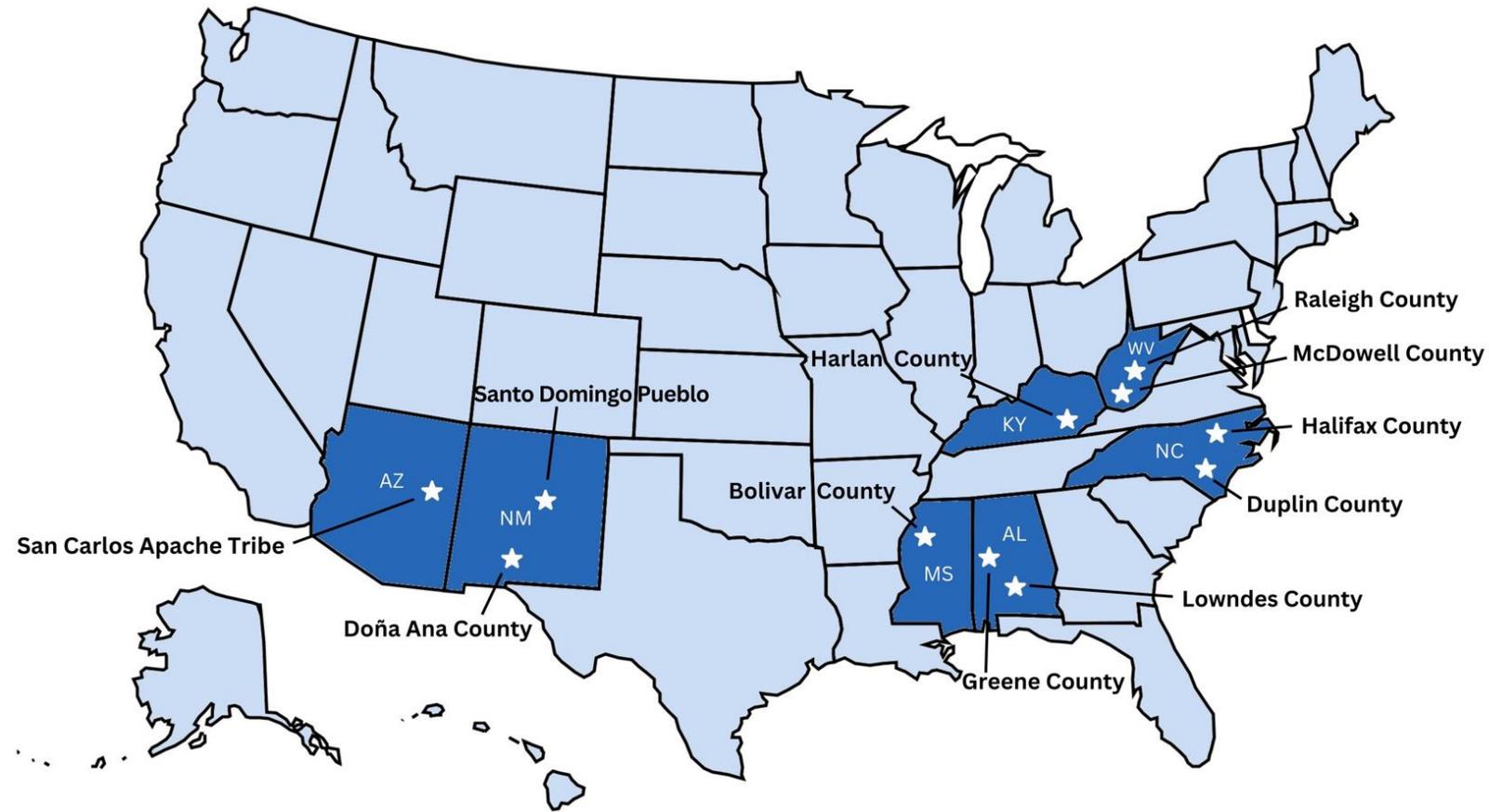
EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

WASHINGTON (August 2, 2022) – Today, at an event in Lowndes County, Alabama, where a significant number of residents lack access to wastewater infrastructure, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced *the Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative*. The new initiative will be piloted in 11 communities across the country where residents lack basic wastewater management that is essential to protecting their health and the environment. EPA, USDA, the

Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative

- Participating communities will receive:
 - Community Wastewater Assessment
 - Community Solutions Plan
- These two documents are starting points to facilitate thoughtful approaches and can be tailored further based on needs of each community
- These two documents do not waive federal or state funding application requirements – but they will help communities take steps forward
- This initiative compliments important state and local efforts
- This is a pilot effort – we anticipate learning and troubleshooting as we go!

Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Initiative – Pilot Communities



What is in the Community Wastewater Assessment

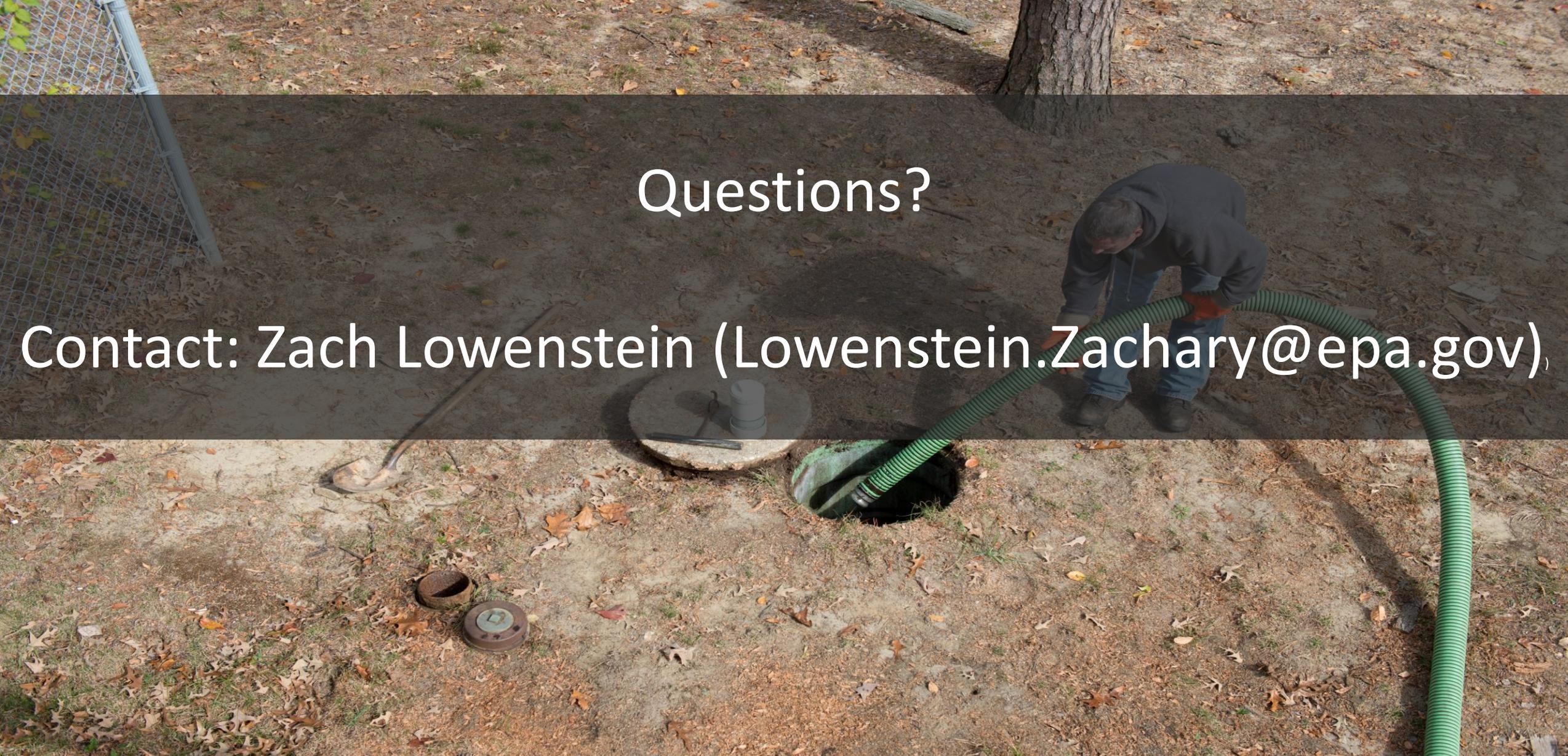
- Community Engagement and Input
- Community Description
- Build Environment Assessment
- Natural Environment Assessment
- Assessment of Need
- Regulatory and Funding Environment

What is in the Community Solutions Plan?

- Documents results of assessment
- Identifies potential solution options for further exploration
- Provides a plan to guide next steps of infrastructure projects and funding applications
- Preliminary project schedule and costs
- Outlines types of TA services needed to address local challenges

Milestones

Milestone	Anticipated Timeline
Project team kick off meeting	Fall 2022
Community listening session	Starting late Fall 2022
Conduct wastewater assessment	Starting late Fall 2022
Develop Solutions Plans	Starting late Spring 2023
Identify and begin next steps (e.g., developing a funding application)	Fall 2023



Questions?

Contact: Zach Lowenstein (Lowenstein.Zachary@epa.gov),