

Homeowner Awareness On-Site Wastewater Management Plan Template

Location: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

E-mail Address: _____

Website URL: _____

Alternate Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Brief Description of Plan

To help ensure that timely septic system maintenance is performed, record-keeping kits and educational materials will be distributed to homeowners.

Community Benefits

Homeowner awareness works well for areas where treatment technologies are limited to conventional systems that require relatively little owner attention. This approach is most appropriate where treatment systems are owned and operated by individual property owners in areas of low environmental sensitivity.

Other Benefits of Homeowner Awareness include:

1. It is completely voluntary – homeowners are responsible for maintaining their own systems, and therefore are the primary beneficiaries of maintaining their own systems. Homeowners do have the option of doing nothing and may not properly maintain their septic systems, even though it is in their best interest to do so.
2. Having a well maintained system extends the life of the system and protects and/or increases property values and homeowner investments (i.e. properties with functioning systems are much more attractive to potential buyers than those with failing systems.)
3. Existing systems are grandfathered and must comply with new, stricter regulations only when they fail and need to be replaced. It is in the best interests of homeowners to properly maintain their septic systems rather than upgrade and replace failing systems.

Measurable Objectives

Of the _____ homes in this area, _____ will receive record-keeping kits to organize information about and educational materials on how to properly maintain their on-site wastewater treatment system. As a result of receiving this information, _____ will fill out the record-keeping kits and _____ will get their systems pumped and inspected.

Implementation Plan (timetable with target dates)

Target Date Activity

_____	Homeowners meet and agree that homeowner awareness is the preferred method of on-site wastewater treatment system management for their area.
_____	Homeowners select theme and format of the educational materials they would like to use in their area - The Groundwater Foundation will provide a menu of options for the homeowners to select from.
_____	Obtain copies of record-keeping kits and educational materials.
_____	Distribute copies of record-keeping kits and educational materials – make sure homeowners are aware of the toll-free numbers they can call if they have any questions.
_____	Conduct a survey of homeowners to find out if they have utilized the kit and have any questions - the survey will also collect data regarding the homeowners' satisfaction with this management method and the impact of the educational materials.
During the Survey	If they have not done so in the last 3-5 years, encourage homeowners to schedule an inspection and pumping of their system.

Implementation Assistance Providers

Certified On-site Wastewater Treatment System Professional

- ▶ Inspect and pump systems when contacted by homeowners

Homeowners

- ▶ Fill out record-keeping materials
- ▶ Utilize educational materials
- ▶ Schedule and pay for an inspection and pumping of their system if they have not done so in the last 3-5 years
- ▶ Complete a survey to document impacts of project and educational materials and satisfaction with this management method

Local Leadership

- ▶ Help organize, promote, and host a homeowner meeting to adopt homeowner awareness as the preferred method of on-site wastewater treatment system management for the area
- ▶ Determine the theme and format of educational materials
- ▶ Distribute the kits/materials
- ▶ Conduct follow-up survey of homeowners

Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

- ▶ Provide contact information for certified on-site wastewater treatment system professionals throughout Nebraska
- ▶ Answer technical and regulatory questions about on-site wastewater treatment systems and management

The Groundwater Foundation

- ▶ Provide access to education and awareness materials
- ▶ Answer general questions about groundwater and education and protection activities that may be implemented on behalf of groundwater

Nebraska Health & Human Services

- ▶ Conduct inspections of on-site wastewater treatment systems (by request)
- ▶ Consult with certified on-site wastewater treatment system professionals and other certified inspectors who have questions on how best to design, install, and maintain a system

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

- ▶ Answer questions and refer interested people to the appropriate regulatory and permitting agencies

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension

- ▶ Has developed a record-keeping kit specifically for Nebraskans
- ▶ Provide education and awareness materials
- ▶ Answer technical and regulatory questions about on-site wastewater treatment systems and management

County Government (varies from county to county)

- ▶ May provide contact information for certified on-site wastewater treatment system professionals in the county
- ▶ May answer technical and regulatory questions about on-site wastewater treatment systems and management specific to the county

Local Groundwater Guardian Teams (varies from team to team - visit www.groundwater.org/Active/gg_list.asp for a current list of Groundwater Guardian Communities and profiles of the work they do)

- ▶ Help distribute the kits/materials (if needed)
- ▶ Assist with follow up survey of homeowners (if needed)
- ▶ Answer questions about local groundwater resources

Implementation Resources

Human

- schedule, promote, host and facilitate the homeowner meeting
- adopt homeowner awareness as the preferred method of system management
- develop and distribute the kits and educational materials
- arrange for system inspection and pumping
- conduct the system inspection and pumping
- ask and answer questions about system maintenance in particular and groundwater in general
- conduct the follow up survey
- encourage homeowners to schedule and pay for an inspection and pumping of their systems if they have not done so in the last 3-5 years

Financial

- cost of homeowner meeting
- cost of record-keeping kits and educational materials
- cost of system inspection and pumping

Materials

- record-keeping kits developed by University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension and supplied by The Groundwater Foundation
- educational materials developed and supplied by The Groundwater Foundation
- materials to pump and inspect system (supplied by certified professional)

Evaluation

This plan will be a success if:

- _____ (e.g. 100%) of homes receive record-keeping kits and educational materials
- _____ (e.g. at least 50%) of homeowners fill out the record-keeping kits within the first month after they are distributed
- _____ (e.g. at least 75%) of homeowners fill out the record-keeping kits within the first six months after they are distributed
- _____ (e.g. at least 50%) of homeowners who have not gotten their systems inspected and pumped in the last 3-5 years arrange to do so