

Accepted

Minutes from the Individual Sewage Disposal System (ISDS) Task Force – Regulatory Working Group Meeting of March 28, 2001

The meeting was held in Conference Room 280, DEM Office of Water Resources, 235 Promenade Street and began at approximately 8:15 AM.

In attendance:

Russ Chateaufneuf, Tom Getz, Ken Jones, George Loomis, Rob Adler, Eugenia Marks, Joe Frisella, Kendra Beaver, Alison Walsh, Scott Moorehead, Ernie Panciera, Deb Knauss

Review of minutes from March 8, 2001

Minutes were accepted as presented.

Funeral Homes and Beauty Parlors

Funeral Homes - It was reported that Massachusetts requires that funeral parlors have a holding tank to which all non-sanitary sewage must be delivered. The contents of the holding tank are pumped and delivered to a pre-treatment facility.

Beauty parlors in Massachusetts are required to have a holding tank to which certain sinks used for hair treatments discharge.

Nutrients

Nitrogen – During recent meetings interest has been expressed in expanding the areas in which DEM is considering requiring nitrogen-reducing technologies to protect additional waterbodies from nitrogen inputs. DEM agreed to seek-out a copy of a report prepared by Alan Desbonnet in 1996, for review as we continue to consider this issue.

2001 House Bill relating to tax credit - Representative Garvey introduced H 6173, which proposes that a property owner who owns a residence where a cesspool has been upgraded to current DEM ISDS standards, may claim an income tax credit or a municipal property tax credit of up to seventy (70) percent of the upgrade costs, for the tax year in which the upgrade was made. The bill also proposes the tax credit for conventional systems which are upgraded to nitrogen reducing systems. H 6173 has been referred to the Committee on Finance.

Phosphorous - There was some discussion of the environmental implications of phosphorous in freshwater bodies. Since treatment options to protect water bodies from P inputs from septic systems are more limited than for N-reduction, it was hoped that phosphorous inputs to the environment could be reduced via some other method. Toward this end DEM reviewed RI's existing phosphate reduction legislation. The 1995 act lists extensive exemptions; it essentially restricts residential use of cleaning agents containing phosphorous in amounts greater than 0.5% by weight and residential and commercial use of cleaning agents containing phosphorous in amounts greater 8.7 percent by weight, which are intended for use in dishwashers.

One option for reducing inputs of phosphorous to groundwater is to make use of naturally occurring soils to attenuate phosphorous present in septic system effluent. Natural soils have greater phosphorous attenuation potential than ISDS gravel. The placement of leachfields, higher in the profile than the current maximum depth allowed, will dramatically increase phosphorous removal, from septic tank effluent, by the leachfield.

Removal of Cesspools

There was discussion concerning removal of cesspools; a risk-based system and point of sale were discussed. The group expressed hope to meet with a representative of the Realtors' Association to discuss possible options for removal of cesspools.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:15.

Next Meetings

The Meetings will be held in Conference Room 280, DEM Office of Water Resources, 235 Promenade Street.

- Tuesday, April 10, 2001 8 AM to 10:00 AM
- Tuesday, April 24, 2001 8 AM to 10:00 AM