Septic System Repair and Replacement Funding Available for Culpeper District

All residents of the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District are now eligible for reimbursement of fifty percent of the expense of pumping, maintaining, repairing or replacing on-lot septic systems. The District has just received a two year grant to expand their current septic system program to all areas of the five county conservation district; all areas Culpeper, Greene, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties. This grant is focused on reducing any existing or potential impacts on local ground and surface water quality. E. Coli bacteria in some local streams has long been identified as being higher than expected by state water quality standards, although other pollutants can also be involved, particularly nutrients. An additional benefit to the property owner is the assurance that their system is up to standards and functioning properly. It is a win-win for both water quality and property value.

Program participants are eligible for several different payments depending on the actual needs of their system. Reimbursement payments are typically fifty percent although can go as high as seventy-five percent for individuals that qualify for low income status. Maximum payments to property owners under average income levels are $150 maximum towards a pump out and inspection; $3,500 maximum towards a repair; $4,000 maximum towards a conventional system or $4,500 if a pump is required to move the liquids to the drain field; and $10,000 maximum towards an alternative engineered system. Pump outs and inspections are encouraged by everyone; such preventative maintenance extends the life of a system and prevents higher costs later on if the systems fail. If further repairs are indicated by the inspection, the owner is still eligible for the additional repair payments. **Applications are required and need to be approved prior to the work being done or funding can be declined.** Free assistance with initial assessments of individual system needs is available from the District. Reimbursement payments are made promptly once the work has been completed. The program is entirely voluntary and assistance from the District is free of charge.

Further information on the program is available from the District at 825-8591 or 948-7531. Funding for these projects has been secured by the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Commonwealth of Virginia.

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