

# Operation & Maintenance Program

ADAM LITKE, MPH (HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR)

DAN LARK, REHS (EH DIRECTOR)

CHRIS LOXTERMAN, REHS (EH SUPERVISOR)

KRISTI PINKLEY, REHS (O&M PROGRAM LEAD)



**GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTH**  
*Promoting and Protecting Community Health*

# What is the O&M Program?

- The Operation & Maintenance program is a statewide initiative to ensure proper ongoing system maintenance of **ALL** Home Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTS) to protect public health and minimize pollution of Ohio waters
- **Unfunded mandate** by Ohio Department of Health (ODH) in the 2015 rule update



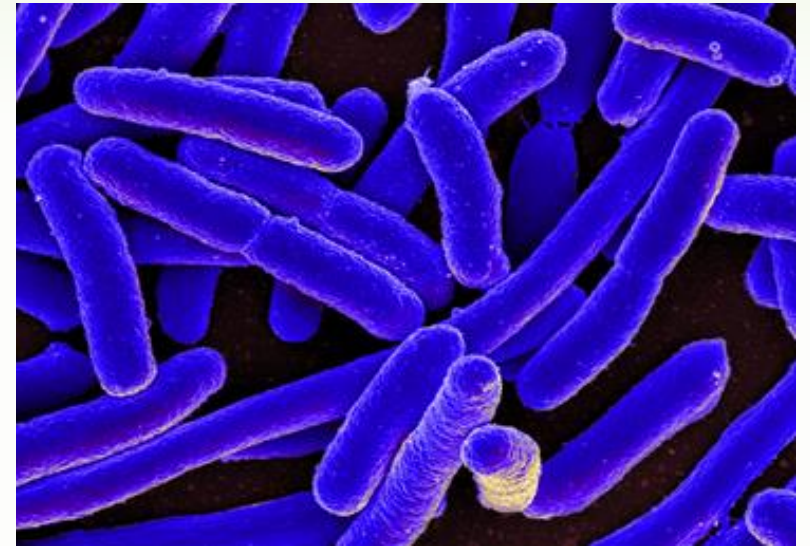
# Why were O&M rules passed?

- “Approximately **31%** of all household sewage treatment systems throughout the state of Ohio are experiencing some degree of failure.” – ODH 2012 Clean Watersheds Needs Survey Report
- For Northeast Ohio, was estimated at **38%**
- Although several factors affect system performance (age, water usage, soils, etc.), ongoing maintenance is a significant factor we *can* control



# Reasons to Maintain your HSTS

- Safe, Effective, & Enduring Operation
- Protection of individual and community investments
- Decreased impact on water quality and the environment



# Phased Roll-Out



- Approximately **30-40,000** Household Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTSs) in Geauga County
- **ALL** are projected to be enrolled in program by 2030
- We are in our final phase of enrollment
  - Will enter all remaining conventional systems over a 5-year period



# Permitting Process Basics

- New enrollees get postcard invite for public meetings ~2 weeks before bill is mailed
- Notified by mail at least 1 month prior to fee due date
- 2 weeks before deadline - send reminder post card if unpaid
- Late fee is 25%, per state code
- Unpaid fees will be assessed to property taxes each year
- Host at least 3 public evening meetings for each new group



# Permit Types

System Design	Permit Term	Permit or Sample Cost per Term	Permit Conditions / Service Requirements per Term
<b>NPDES Discharging Systems</b>	1 Year	\$155 – Sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Service Reports / year under a current Maintenance Contract</li> <li>• Annual Sample collected by GPH</li> </ul>
<b>Spray Irrigation Systems</b>	1 Year	\$150 – Sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Service Reports / year under a current Maintenance Contract</li> <li>• Annual Sample collected by GPH</li> </ul>
<b>Aeration, Drip, and Peat Systems</b>	1 Year	\$30 - Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Service (or Pumping Report)</li> </ul>
<b>On-Lot Septics</b>	5 Years	\$100 – Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Pumping (or Service Report)</li> </ul>
<b>Off-Lot Septics &amp; Systems of Unknown Design</b>	5 Years	\$100 – Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Pumping (or Service Report)</li> <li>• System must be evaluated by GPH in 10 years to verify treatment performance</li> </ul>

← Already Enrolled; Renewing Annually

← Currently being Enrolled



# Permit Compliance

- **Health Department will track compliance with permit requirements based upon submission of system maintenance records** (any of the following are acceptable) during the 5-year permit term:
  - Pump
  - Service
  - Inspection
- Records are required to be submitted to the health department by pumpers and service providers on your behalf within 60 days of their visit, however it is recommended to retain your own records as back-up
- Tracking compliance administratively keeps costs down



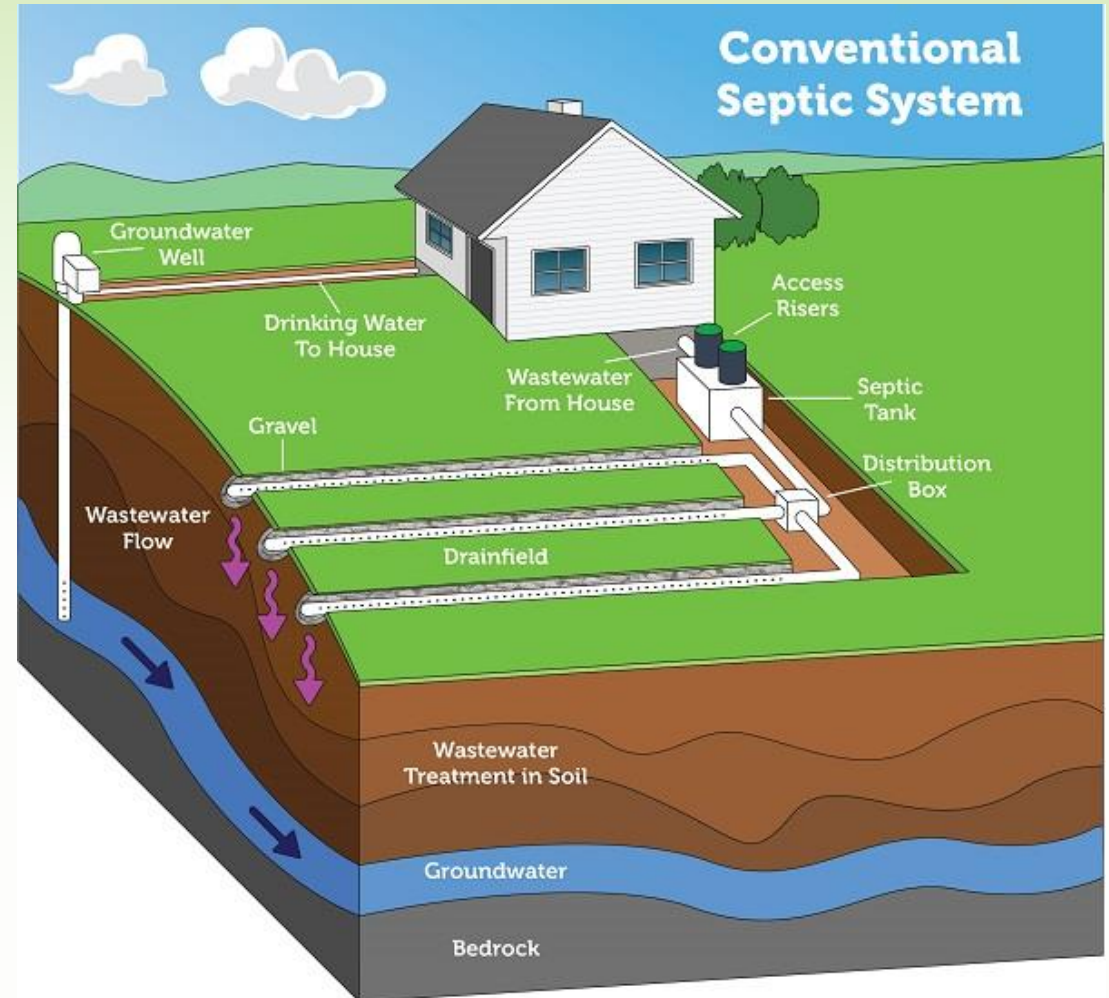
# Non-Compliance

- As the deadline approaches, GPH will make various attempts to reach out to owners that are not showing proof of maintenance on record
- **Systems that do not receive at least one pumping, service, or inspection during the 5-year permit term, will be subject to a Non-Compliance inspection from GPH at an additional cost**
  - It is a better value for money to obtain required maintenance, rather than an inspection by GPH (we can only identify issues, not fix them)
- Systems will be evaluated to determine if they pose a public health hazard/nuisance, and will be issued orders if found to be failing



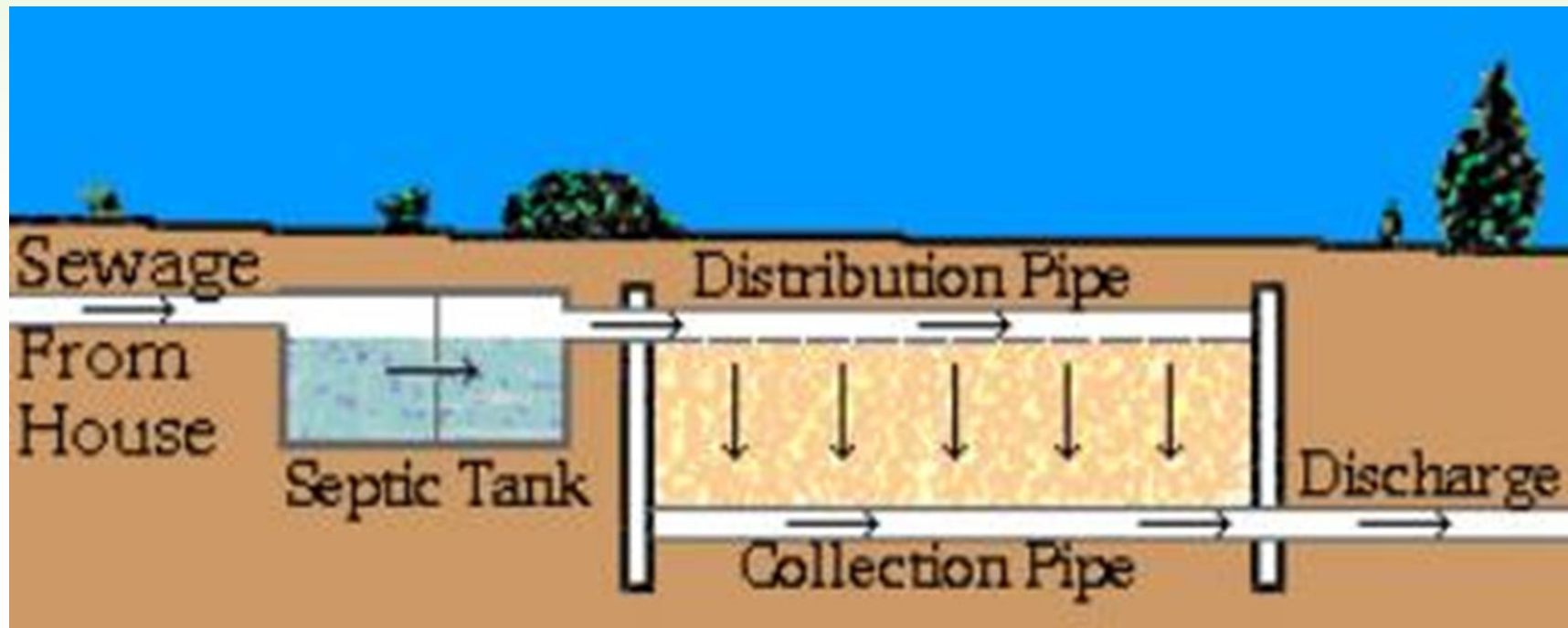
# Currently Enrolling: On-Lot Systems (Leach Lines/Mounds)

- System treats the wastewater completely on owner's property, returning water to the groundwater table
- Required to have the tank pumped, serviced, OR inspected at least once every 5 years (starting from permit date)



# Also Currently Enrolling: **Off-Lot Systems** (Sub-surface Sand Filter Beds, Etc.)

- These systems do *some* treatment of wastewater in the septic tank, but ultimately discharge wastewater into our creeks, storm sewers, and road ditches



# Off-Lot Systems

- It is suspected that many of these systems provide insufficient treatment before the wastewater is released into the environment
- To address this, **owners with these systems are being given notice that the system will need to be evaluated by GPH in 10 years to determine if the wastewater is being sufficiently treated**
- Systems will not be “failed” based on age, but only on performance
- These systems, like On-Lot systems, will be issued 5-year permits requiring one pumping, service, or inspection



# WPCLF Grant Program

- Water Pollution Control Loan Fund
- Program to assist homeowner with repair or replacement of failing HSTS
- Funded through the state
- Eligibility is based on household income
- Homeowner must be the primary resident
- Contact GPH directly with any questions



# Questions?





# Contact Information

Geauga Public Health  
12611 Ravenwood Dr, Suite 300  
Chardon, OH 44024



**GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTH**  
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Dan Lark, REHS  
EH Director  
(440) 279-1915  
[dlark@geaugacountyhealth.org](mailto:dlark@geaugacountyhealth.org)

Adam Litke, MPH  
Health Administrator  
(440) 279-1900  
[alitke@geaugacountyhealth.org](mailto:alitke@geaugacountyhealth.org)

Chris Loxterman, REHS  
EH Supervisor  
(440) 279-1919  
[cloxterman@geaugacountyhealth.org](mailto:cloxterman@geaugacountyhealth.org)

Kristi Pinkley, REHS  
O&M Program Lead  
(440) 279-1941  
[kpinkley@geaugacountyhealth.org](mailto:kpinkley@geaugacountyhealth.org)