

May 26, 2005
Ground Water Protection Study Group
Notes from Meeting

Commissioner Kolbe opened the meeting with a welcome and had each person introduce themselves for those that may not have been at the last meeting and for new attendees. The following people attended the meeting. Commissioner Bob Kolbe, John Romani, Derrick Iles, Bob Kappel, Pat Hammond, Scott Hipple, Jim Evans, Tom Brown, Scott Anderson, Deb Bunde, Mike Struck, Paul Aslesen, Phil Kappen, and Dianna Bartels.

Commissioner Kolbe asked for input and review of the notes from the meeting on April 14, 2005. This led into the discussion of the number of residences that should be allowed in an area (density) before a central sewer system is needed.

Phil Kappen, Minnehaha County Planning, gave an explanation of Minnehaha County's On-site Wastewater disposal system. He indicated that it was a combination of South Dakota's and Minnesota's regulations. Discussion followed. Phil suggested areas of possible improvement to the systems being installed. He then explained that finder wire could be laid in the trenches with the drainfield, which would allow future homeowners and others to more adequately locate the location of drainfield. It was further suggested that floor drains being installed in single family residences be regulated. Currently, the state regulates floor drains in commercial and industrial uses, but not within residences. The use of garbage disposals was also discussed.

Scott Hipple, SD Department of Natural Resources, gave a presentation on how septic systems work, their effectiveness and problems.

The study group then discussed the life expectancy of a typical wastewater disposal system. Tom Brown indicated that it has been his experience that they last somewhere between 15 and 25 years. He indicated that last year his business replaced 34 tanks in the area. The group discussed when a tank should be pumped. Scott Hipple explained the use of metal tanks. Septic tank collapses were addressed, with reasons for failure and results being outlined.

The group then considered what possibilities might exist for post education. The home owner needs to be informed on how to best maintain a septic system.

The next meeting was set for June 23rd at 10:00 am in the Multi-purpose room.
Areas to be discussed at the next meeting.

1. Proposed Ordinance Amendment to On-Site Wastewater Ordinance adding the requirement for finder wire and regulating the use of floor drains in residences, commercial & industrial buildings.
2. Public education possibilities using the County's existing website.
3. Post education program, educating homeowners on the need for septic system maintenance. This could include placing information on tax notices, utility bills and any other public notices. Education program could also inform realtors and possibly make pumping information part of the information required to be given to new homeowners as part of the sale of property.