



Notice from the Ministry of Health, Health Protection Branch

Subject: Stakeholder Seminars - Review of Consultation Draft Version 3 Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (APEGBC) and the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC), will be hosting a series of afternoon seminars at five locations in BC to present and seek feedback on the Ministry's stakeholder consultation draft Version 3 Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual (SPM). For those interested, there is also a morning session on the same day to discuss the APEGBC Professional Practice Guidelines – Onsite Sewerage Systems.

There is a fee to attend the morning session, but the afternoon SPM session will be free of charge. Participants are welcomed to register for either session - registration is mandatory. Information and Sign-up for this event is available via the following link:

http://www.apeg.bc.ca/prodev/events/Sewerage_Seminar_Oct13_Nanaimo.html

Materials to be provided to participants registered in the afternoon session include:

- i) The consultation draft version 3 Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual
- ii) A worksheet of practical examples to be covered during the seminars.

Ministry staff will be present at the seminars to collect feedback from attendees regarding the consultation draft Version 3 Standard Practice Manual, and detailed feedback questionnaires will be provided at the seminars.

Based on feedback received during and after the seminars, the SPM version 3 consultation draft will be revised accordingly, and be submitted for broader stakeholder consultation at a later date.

Any questions regarding the seminars can be directed to rupert.benzon@gov.bc.ca. We look forward to seeing you at the seminar location nearest you!

Announcement

Sheila Colbert-Kerns and the team at WetlandsPacific Corp. appreciate the expressions of condolences from the membership. Although this is a difficult time and Curt is sadly missed, the company will continue to conduct business. We can be reached at either steve@wetpac.ca or Sheila@wetpac.ca.

Training Opportunities

Onsite Wastewater Practitioner Training—Installer/Planner

November 6, 7 & 8, 2013

November 20, 21, & 22, 2013

Location: Abbotsford, BC

Students must complete all six days and successfully pass the final exam in order to achieve certification.

Practical Training Events

Lower Mainland - November 19, 2013 Site & Soils Evaluation



Saving Septic

Homes contain a huge number of consumer products for every possible purpose. We have cleaners for toilets, sinks, floors, windows, furniture, and carpet. We have microfiber cloths, antibacterial wipes, and paper towels for wiping surfaces. This is not to mention laundry soaps, fabric softeners, dryer sheets, and the many other products that we use on a daily basis in our homes.

There is no possible way for a person to research each of these products individually, so we tend to trust the packaging when it tells us it's, "eco-friendly", "green", or "Septic Safe". Unfortunately we rarely get to see the science used to test these products or know what standards products must meet, if any, to be labelled in this fashion. This column will explore the impacts of a variety of products on Private Sewage (Septic) Systems.

Vol. 1: How Septic Safe are Flushable Wipes?

Using the bathroom has been a human function since the dawn of man. As such, we have continually found ways to make it more and more sanitary. This evolution has brought to the forefront a relatively new product, Flushable Wipes. Made by countless brands, for various markets, these sanitary wipes seem to be the new "it" bathroom item.

The problem with flushable wipes is that their packaging advises consumers that they are sewer and septic safe. After checking a variety of resources, this seems to be untrue. Many cities and regional districts are now issuing public announcements asking residents not to use flushable wipes. They have found that the wipes are not breaking down like toilet paper does in the water cycle of the toilet; which is creating huge issues in regional collection facilities. Issues have included: clogged sewer lines, sewer backups, and blocked intakes and filters. In some locations, these issues have resulted in costs of up to \$100,000 per year.

Seeing the issues with flushable wipes in communities with big pipe allows us to consider the same risk to a home on a private septic system. The wipes are more durable than toilet paper, creating more risk of clogged pipes, building up more solids in septic tanks, potentially plugging filters, and in some cases even escaping the tank and ending up in the treatment field/mound itself. Clearly this is an issue that has the potential to cause huge inconvenience and cost to the homeowner.

WCOWMA-BC recommends that you advise your clients of the potential risks of using any form of sanitary flushable wipe. If they are determined to use such products, discuss the option of disposing them in a sealed trash container instead of flushing them into their septic system.

To see video footage related to the issue of flushable wipes in the wastewater environment, please watch the following clips.

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/video-hub/home--garden/bed--bath/flushable-wipes/16935265001/22783507001/>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hdX3c5wgcE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ81Xpe9rvA>

Save the date!

Next Convention and Trade Show

Kamloops

February 20—23, 2014



Membership Technical Discussion Forum Now Available Online

WCOWMA and its affiliated provincial chapters have launched a forum to allow members to discuss technical issues and provide information to one another on onsite wastewater issues. The forum is an open discussion format, however it is monitored and participants are asked to refrain from soliciting to their fellow members.

HOW TO USE THE FORUM

To get started:

You will need your username and password to access the forum. Most members should have one, but if you don't, or you can't remember it, please contact the WCOWMA office so we can set one up. To set up a new account, we will require your email address.

Once you have your username and password, go to www.wcowma.com. In the upper right hand corner, enter your username and password, then click "forum login". You can now click on the words "WCOWMA Forums" in the upper right hand menu bar, or use the link within the drop-down menu under "Members".

You now have access to all of the WCOWMA forums. Currently, there are 5 forums; one for each province as well as a link to view the forum Terms & Conditions. Select your provincial forum (or check out what's going on in another province) by clicking on the title of the forum you wish to enter.

From here you can see, at a glance, all of the topics that have been created so far. Join in on a topic already created by clicking on its title, or create your own topic toward the bottom of the page. Simply enter a title in the "Topic Title" block, and then start writing in the text block below; once you are done you can click on the "Submit" button.

To join a topic simply click on the topic link, read the posts, and feel free to comment towards the bottom of the page. Please keep in mind that by using the forum you agree to the Terms and Conditions, which can be found on the main page of the forum. Your first comment will need to be approved by a moderator, so it may take a little while for it to show up. Please be patient.

If you have any trouble, we are always happy to help. Please contact the forum administrator at reports@wcowma.com.