

A Different Kind of “Spring Meeting”

I hope by the time you read this we have warmer temps and the April sleet and snow is a distant memory.

It was a different kind of “Spring Meeting” on April 14th. My plans, like usual for the spring meeting, was to camp at the Traverse City State Park. Get there on Friday and enjoy a camp fire and discuss with my wife what wineries she wants to go to and restock for the summer. We do that after the meeting on Saturday. Well Mother Nature put the stop to that venture. The motorhome didn’t get de-winterized due to the weather. I scrambled to get a room at the casino to entertain my wife while I was at the meeting. You know that is going to cost me! Oh well we had a great time with our MSTA friends and made the meeting through the sleet and snow. A lot of tough Michigan MSTA members made it too. Not the attendance that was scheduled but still a good showing



considering the weather. The restocking of the wine rack was put off for another time and we played the one arm bandits and contributed to the local tribe at Turtle Creek Casino in the evenings and got an early start home on Sunday.

The meeting went well and we really appreciate National Vacuum Equipment for hosting our spring meeting again. All the scheduled speakers made the trip and thanks to all for sharing your expertise in your field of work.

Thanks to the members who could get out and make the trip to Traverse City spring meeting and I hope you all have a great summer and enjoy some of the good weather. Hope to see you at the Fall Meeting!

Submitted by:
Dave W. Snyder
(MSTA President)



Spring Meeting

Despite the eight inches of snow and freezing rain in Traverse City, the Spring MSTA Meeting held on April 14th was a success. Thanks again to our friends at National Vacuum Equipment who hosted MSTA once again at their awesome conference facilities and thanks too for supplying lunch! The Spring Meeting included the Board Meeting as well as speakers from Golden Circle Advisors, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and General Insurance Agency.

Chris Kuttner from Golden Circle Advisors talked about the many things you need to think about when selling your septic business. Kristine Rendon from the MDEQ, Environmental Health Programs Unit was there to tell us about SepticSmart which is an EPA program to encourage homeowners and communities to care for and maintain their septic systems. Greg Merricle from MDEQ was also there to answer questions from the audience in regards to the septage program. Lastly, Nate Weisenburger from General Insurance Agency spoke about Workers Compensation Insurance for the folks in our industry. For more information about Chris Kuttner and Kristine Rendon's presentation, go to www.msta.biz and click on Events at the top, then on Past Presentations.

Thanks again to the attendees and speakers who made the trip to Traverse City during the unprecedented weather conditions.let's hope that the Fall meeting will be much, much better. More information about the Fall meeting will be available on the MSTA website in late summer.

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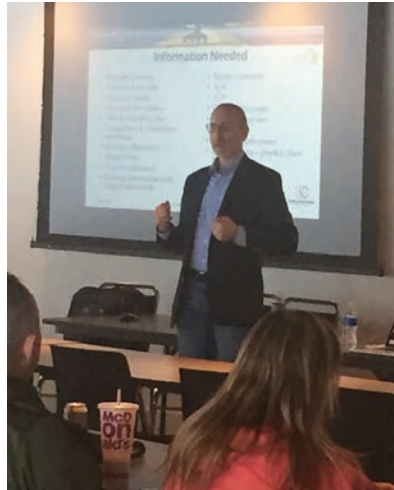
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Getting your CSE Credits off from the MSTA Website



As you already know, we have a new website and database system to track your membership and CSE credits. The old website contained all your CSE Credits prior to August of 2017. If you don't have records of your credits prior to August 2017, you will not be able to get them by logging onto the website.

Instead you will have to send an email to the address below to request a report of those. The new website contains your CSE Credits from August 2017 through now. To get a record of the credits you received from the Fall 2017 meeting or the 2018 Michigan Onsite WW Conference, follow the steps below:

1. Log into your account on www.msta.biz. If you do not remember your username /or password, click on "Forgot Your Password?" on the MSTA Homepage. You will receive an automatic email with instructions to get your username / password.
2. Once you are logged in, go to "My Membership Information"
3. Click on the "other information" tab
4. Click on "Prior Event Registrations"
5. Find the class you just attended and click on the symbol with the checkmark inside the square
6. A copy of your transcript will appear showing the credits you earned by going to the meeting
7. Print this page and keep it for your records to be turned into the DEQ when you renew your license.

Please save these instructions for future use. Please also save your username and password somewhere safe as well so that you can log onto the MSTA website again. By the way, your username and password can be changed to something you remember more easily by clicking on "Member Information / change username and password" (right next to the "other information" tab).

Thank You.

Karlyn Wickham
MSTA Executive Officer
executiveofficer.msta.biz@gmail.com



What's new on the MSTA Website

www.msta.org

We hope that you like the new MSTA Website! Below is some information on the Resource Section of the website:

Operational ByLaws – Take a look at the MSTA ByLaws which are the rules and guidelines by which MSTA operates

MDEQ approved CSE Classes – takes you to the State of Michigan website where you can see what classes have been approved for Continuing Septage Education

MDEQ – takes you to the State of Michigan's Septage section of the website

General Insurance Agency – Many of you have Business Owners Insurance from General Insurance Agency. This will take you directly to their website.

Michigan Truck Safety – this will take you directly to the Michigan Truck Safety website

Newsletters – view some past issues of the MSTA Newsletter

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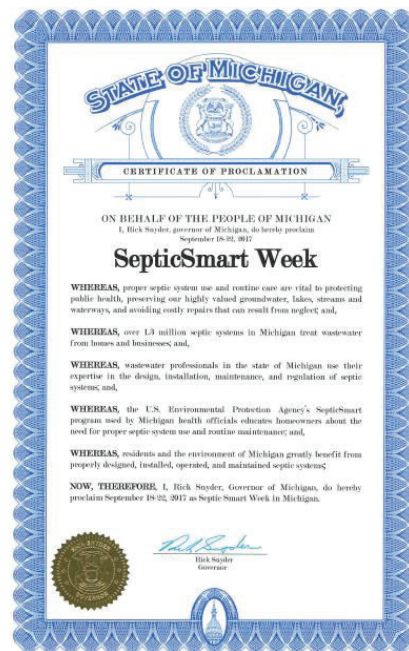
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Let's be **SepticSmart** in Michigan!

On Monday, September 17, 2018; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – in conjunction with federal, state and local governments, and private sector partners – will kick off its annual **SepticSmart** Week to encourage American homeowners and communities to properly maintain their septic systems www.epa.gov/septic. Governor Snyder proclaimed **SepticSmart** week in the State of Michigan for 2017 and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Onsite Wastewater Program is in the process of getting **SepticSmart** officially proclaimed for the State of Michigan **September 17-21, 2018**.

More than 1.3 million homes and businesses in Michigan depend on septic systems to treat wastewater. If not maintained, failing septic systems can contaminate groundwater and harm the environment by releasing bacteria, viruses, and household toxics to local waterways. Proper septic system maintenance protects public health, the environment, and saves the homeowner money through avoided costly repairs. Michigan has a vision to protect and promote the wise use of its globally unique water resources. This vision is outlined in the Strategy for Sustaining Michigan's Water Heritage (Water Strategy) www.michigan.gov/waterstrategy. Within the Water Strategy, a key recommendation is to ensure clean and safe water through passing a statewide sanitary code.



This is a critical time in the State of Michigan as two Bills (HB5752 and 5753) have recently been introduced into the House of Representatives and referred to the House Natural Resources Committee. These Bills pertain to the establishment of state and local standards for onsite wastewater treatment systems and the development of a statewide code to govern the installation, operation, maintenance, and inspection of septic systems; including regular septic system inspections or assessments. Discussions with stakeholders have been initiated to see how Michigan can move forward with these uniform standards.

The DEQ Onsite Wastewater Program is enthusiastically promoting the **SepticSmart** message in various



outreach efforts. We are promoting **SepticSmart** basics to elementary school age children to begin initiating discussions to be mindful of what is flushed through fun activities. Our program has presented material at various Annual Education Conferences, County Contractor/Septic Installer Meetings, Elementary School Science Fairs and promotional events. We are less than ½ way into 2018 and we have reached out to over 3000 Michigan Residents that have heard the **SepticSmart** message and many of these people are able to pass along the **SepticSmart** message to others. This is being done by supplying educational resources to those in direct contact with homeowners of onsite wastewater systems increasing **SepticSmart** awareness across the state of Michigan.

In addition to the promotional activities, the US EPA has made available free material that can be downloaded and utilized by all entities to help spread the **SepticSmart** message. These materials include educational pamphlets, booklets, flyers, and postcards that can be downloaded on your computer and printed. For your convenience, we have listed these items and they can be found on our website www.michigan.gov/deqsepticsmart.



Also available is a Social Media Toolkit that can be used as a guideline to share and promote the messages of **SepticSmart** Week. This toolkit contains material links and information your organization can use to advertise and promote. The messages can either be copied or customized to reach your specific audience to focus on educating homeowners and communities on the proper care and maintenance of their septic system.

The **SepticSmart** core messages include:

- **Protect It and Inspect It:** Homeowners should generally have their system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to their state or local health department's recommendations. Tanks should be pumped when necessary, typically every three to five years.
- **Think at the Sink:** Avoid pouring fats, grease, and solids down the drain. These substances can clog a system's pipes and drainfield.
- **Don't Overload the Commode:** Only put things in the drain or toilet that belong there. For example, coffee grounds, dental floss, disposable diapers and wipes, feminine hygiene products, cigarette butts, and cat litter can all clog and potentially damage septic systems.
- **Don't Strain Your Drain:** Be water-efficient and spread out water use. Fix plumbing leaks and install faucet aerators and water-efficient products. Spread out laundry and dishwasher loads throughout the day – too much water at once can overload a system that hasn't been pumped recently.
- **Shield Your Field:** Remind guests not to park or drive on a system's drainfield, where the vehicle's weight could damage buried pipes or disrupt underground flow.
- **Pump your Tank:** Routinely pumping your tank can prevent your septic system from premature failure, which can lead to groundwater contamination.
- **Test Your Drinking Water Well:** If septic systems aren't properly maintained, leaks can contaminate well water. Testing your drinking water well is the best way to ensure your well water is free from contaminants.

Please join us in spreading the **SepticSmart** message! For more information please visit our website www.michigan.gov/deqsepticsmart; the EPA Septic Systems website at; www.epa.gov/septic; or email Kristine Rendon of the DEQ Onsite Wastewater Program at rendonk@michigan.gov.

Let's Do our Part and be **SepticSmart!!**

Kristine Rendon, REHS
Environmental Quality Analyst
DEQ- Onsite Wastewater Program

68Th Michigan On-Site Wastewater Disposal Conference

Please mark your calendar for January 8-10, 2019 (Tuesday – Thursday) for the 68th Michigan On-Site Wastewater Disposal Conference. The conference will be held once again at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, MI. The 2018 conference brought in a good crowd of onsite professionals and was quite successful. The annual conference is a great time to learn more about our industry. You have the opportunity to rub shoulders with suppliers, regulators, colleagues, competitors, friends, and educators. Furthermore, this GREAT educational opportunity is offered at a time of year most onsite professionals are not as busy.

Arrangements are being made for Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) accreditation of all the conference sessions to count toward continuing education credit hours required for MDEQ licensed septage haulers.

Vendor Booths are planning to be open Tuesday afternoon and through most the day Wednesday. Please contact Dan Milan, onsite wastewater vice-chair and vendor coordinator at 800-756-4526, if you are interested in a booth this year.

Some of the topics discussed at the previous planning meetings for possible inclusion in the 2019 conference are:

- MDEQ Track - Lenawee Case Study
- MDEQ Question & Answer Session
- Pumper Truck Inspection from a Haulers Perspective (Possible Trip Outside for Show and Tell)
- CDL Drug Testing and Recommended Training
- U.S. EPA Part 503 and the Septage Industry
- Michigan Truck Safety Mobile Truck Simulator
- Proper Truck Inspections (Possible Trip Outside for Show and Tell)
- Back to Basics for Sanitarians, Installers & Pumpers
- New Tools for Monitoring Onsite System Performance
- Haulers / pumpers / portable toilet presentations (regulations, insurance, business plans)
- Health Care Reform Update (Roundtable)
- Septage Land Application Injection
- Bidding Proposals for Septic System Installations
- Pumper Stories
- Workshop - Important Factors in Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Design
- Remote Telemetry Panels
- Secondary Containment and Reasons for It - Panel Discussion
- MDEQ Track - Site Suitability Determination
- MDEQ Track - Emerging Issues
- How to Set a Septic Tank - Proper Septic Tank Installation
- MDEQ Land Application
- Meth Awareness - Identifying Hazards
- How to Train Your Sanitarian (Sanitarian Training Methods)
- How to Design a Septic System (Installers & Sanitarians)
- SepticSmart (Education Your Clients/Homeowners)
- Onsite Pumps (Gould/Meyers)
- Poly Portables
- Septic System Enhancements
- Onsite Parts & Pieces (What's New on the Market and How to use it?)
- Soil Compaction on the Job site - Soil Compaction Studies (Soil Texturing)
- Where to Place Portables on Various Construction Sites

- Anatomy of a Septic Truck
- Septic System Basics (Septic 101)
- Septic Installation Presentations
- Vendor Product Showcase Session
- American Society for Asset Protection (ASAP)
- Onsite Wastewater Workshop
- Sewage Sniffing Dogs
- Statewide Sanitary Code
- Many more TBA

Please contact one of the MSTA planning committee members with suggestions of what you would like to see at the 2019 conference. Members include: Jason Spangle (Esch Septic Service, LLC at 989-848-2391) Ralph Bailey (American Rentals at 517-719-6412) and Mark N. Scott (Scott's Excavating at 989-275-5011).

It is the intent of these annual wastewater conferences, organized as a joint venture by the Michigan Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (MOWRA), the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) with the Michigan Environmental Health Association (MEHA), the Michigan Septic Tank Association (MSTA), the Michigan Water Environmental Association (MWEA) and Michigan State University, to educate people involved in the onsite wastewater field.

So, if you want an educated approach to competing in your industry this is an excellent opportunity for you and your employees. There will be more on the conference in the winter newsletter. Hope to see each of you there!

Article submitted by:
 Mark N. Scott
 (Member - Michigan Wastewater Conference Planning Committee)

What is the Right Vertical Separation Distance Between the Bottom of Stone and the “Water Table” ?

As we move closer to the day in Michigan when we will have a uniform statewide code for the design and operation of onsite wastewater systems, this subject seems to bring the most debate among onsite professionals. It is also one of the requirements that vary widely among existing county codes. I believe you will find that this minimum vertical separation distance in many counties is based upon:

Local experience of past practice when the code was written, somewhat guided by the local environmental, political and social sensitivity.

The application of septic tank effluent to drain beds or trenches in a non-uniform manner by gravity flow.
 Simple treatment by means of a septic tank only, with no additional treatment.

I also believe you will find that county codes vary widely throughout the state with regard to whether they have changed over the years to respond to advances in technology, either to improve effluent distribution or to add additional treatment ahead of the soil absorption system, or both. In this article I will try to provide a rational viewpoint from the science behind the subject.

Current Practice --- Without a statewide code in Michigan the vertical separation distance varies from county to county. I believe it is 4' in many counties, but may be as little as 1' or 2' in others. Many counties do give credit for advanced treatment ahead of the soil distribution system, but some do not. The Michigan DEQ guidelines called the “Michigan Criteria”, which only applies to larger community and commercial systems, specifies 4' as a separation distance as a

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minimum. So, by default, the gravity-fed soil absorption system with only a septic tank as treatment and 4' of vertical separation between the bottom of the stone and the water table becomes the bar that has been set in this state against which other proposed treatment means are compared for equivalency.

The Science of the Matter --- In the simplest of onsite systems only about 50% (varies for different parameters) of the treatment occurs in the septic tank, and we depend upon the soil to complete the remainder of the treatment needed for a particular site. Most research indicates that for residential systems, four feet of permeable aerobic soil does a satisfactory job treating septic tank effluent for some parameters on sites with average sensitivity. Remember, we are relying upon the natural soil on the site to do the secondary/tertiary treatment as the water is returned to the environment.

But, in our codes and in our practice we tend to over-simplify the treatment process that takes place in the soil and think in terms of a standard that will be good for all parameters of concern and in all site circumstances. I can't think of a worse place to apply the "one shoe fits all" concept than onsite wastewater systems. On some sites we may be concerned about nutrients contaminating a groundwater aquifer or nearby surface water, and on other sites we may just be concerned about the effluent being absorbed back into the soil. The treatment that is actually attained in the soil profile is dependent upon a number of factors including:

- The application methods
- The soil texture and permeability
- The soil chemistry and organic content

Application Methods --- Treatment of wastewater in the soil is accomplished by a combination of soil microbes and soil chemistry. Microbes attach themselves to the surface of soil grains, or to each other. The goal is to maintain an aerobic environment and culture aerobic microbes in the soil because they provide better treatment than anaerobic conditions. So, our application methods do affect treatment. Slow application of septic tank effluent in small amounts improves treatment in the soil media. Application methods like pressure distribution apply the wastewater over most of the total soil absorption system (SAS) footprint in a more uniform way. If this is combined with timed-dosing to equalize flow throughout the day and reduce doses to smaller amounts, then we can achieve "film flow" through the soil media. This film flow increases the contact time of the wastewater with the upper, more aerobic, portions of the soil profile. Gravity-fed systems overload SAS's in smaller portions of the system by default, thus creating the scenario that large quantities of wastewater flood portions of the system and rush by gravity through soil pores and then saturate those areas deeper into the soil profile, making it more difficult to maintain aerobic conditions at depth. Aerobic microbes living in the top foot or two of the soil do not have much contact time with the effluent to be treated. The equal distribution of smaller doses (using timed dosing) of wastewater result in better treatment of the wastewater in the soil as compared to gravity distribution methods.

Soil Texture --- Soil texture does not just affect the rate at which water moves through the soil. It also affects the degree of saturation the soil will exhibit on a continual basis beneath the application interface. I'm speaking of capillary attraction, the force of which is stronger than gravity. Capillary forces tend to hold water in the soil pores for long periods of time in finer textured soils. In all but the coarsest of soil textures, there may be a significant capillary fringe above the "water table" or less permeable layer. This capillary rise in the soil pores can be as much as a couple of feet or more in fine sand . . . even more in clay and loam. This capillary water fills soil pores, making it more difficult for air to filter in, and thus reducing the chance for aerobic conditions. Remember, capillary forces are stronger than gravity, so vertical movement of applied wastewater is thus impeded. I have personally observed the malfunction of SAS because the bottom of the stone was too close to soil strata with slower permeability, even though equal distribution means were used.

Soil Chemistry --- Soil chemistry and organic content can have a significant effect on how far nutrients and even pathogens and virus move from the application site. For instance, phosphorus will be sequestered if the cation exchange capacity is sufficient. Nitrogen can be removed if aerobically treated effluent is applied to soil with sufficient organic content. I recall some research that indicated that soils with high organic content do a better job of sequestering or deactivating virus. Needless to say, most soils are a hostile environment for the survival of bacterial populations, including pathogens that require carbon as a food source.

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Additional Comments on Virus --- There are only a limited number of studies on the movement and/or deactivation of virus in soils. One of the reasons for this lack of research on virus is that there is no consensus on the risk-benefit ratio for the development of performance limits. Apparently, one “plaque-forming colony” (as they are called because of the analysis protocol) may be enough to cause illness. There is no dose – illness relationship like bacterial pathogens. So without this, it is difficult to agree on how big our sample should be for analysis to find one virus, and what performance limits should be established for soil-based systems. For instance, in the case of coliform as an indicator organism for the risk of pathogenic bacteria, we have found that safe limits of “0” per 100 ml for drinking water and 200 per 100 ml for total body contact represent safe limits. The issue for virus is “What is a safe concentration?” One per 100 ml, one per liter, one per 50 gallons, 1,000 gallons, etc.? Those that have done research have sometimes filtered and concentrated very large volumes of water to find a few viruses. This is not practical for everyday performance testing . . . particularly when there is not agreement on what we accept as a concentration that represents an acceptable risk.

Virus in our wastewater comes from the sick people that generate that wastewater. I believe we should consider the epidemiology of the matter. Isn't it more likely that a virus will be transmitted by person-to-person contact in the home, or sharing linens, etc. than by inadvertent contact with wastewater that has traveled through even a few feet of soil? It seems to me that the risk of virus transmission inside the home is magnitudes greater than after that virus leaves the home in our wastewater.

What is an Adequate Vertical Separation Distance? --- As we consider these factors in the development of the codes of the future, we will undoubtedly be comparing new practices with what we have been doing in the past. The bar against which we will be comparing all “alternative” treatment proposals is the standard gravity treatment system with four feet (4') of vertical separation from the zone of saturation. In such cases we are entirely dependent upon the natural soil to renovate the septic tank effluent before encountering the saturation zone. If we treat the wastewater better by some means of improved treatment, we need not rely on the natural soil above the saturated zone to do the equivalent treatment. In other words, if we use advanced treatment to improve the quality of the effluent to the equivalent of 2' of native soil (i.e. a sand filter with 2' of media), then we should only need 2' of native soil beyond that to provide equivalent overall treatment. Many counties already give credit for improved treatment methods by reducing the required vertical separation beneath the SAS.

But, also when considering the above issues we must keep in mind that all parameters of concern in our environment are not treated to the same degree by any given soil. For instance, biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and suspended solids (SS) are relatively easy to remove in soil based systems. So are bacteria and pathogens. But, virus is another matter, as discussed above. And nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) require very specific conditions or treatment processes to remove them, if necessary. Just changing the vertical separation distance may not help in the case of nutrients.

Considering all of the above, keep in mind that we are not normally drinking the wastewater extracted 4' directly below the SAS! When considering the risk/benefit/cost ratio about where to spend limited resources, where should that be to get the most benefit protecting public health and the environment?

Prepared by:
Larry D. Stephens, P.E.

Larry Stephens is the President of Stephens Consulting Services, PC and has been designing onsite wastewater systems for 38 years. He is also the current President of MOWRA. He may be reached at 517-339-8692.
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Winter Woes – What to Do?

Spring is finally here! The warmer temperatures are certainly refreshing, but they have not yet melted the memory of this winter's harsh conditions. I'm not talking about an excessive accumulation of snow or bitterly deep temperatures. In fact, National Weather Service maps of snow accumulation indicate that this winter was fairly average in terms of precipitation. December was a bit colder than normal, but the remainder of winter temperatures was absolutely average.

What about this year then, made conditions harsh? A strange combination of volatile daily temperatures that fluctuated between freezing to above freezing, and uncooperative precipitation (lack of snow cover where it counted), made the ground hard. Really hard – like the kind of impenetrable hardness that reduces the effectiveness of a pick ax to that of a floppy pool noodle.

Frost-permeated ground makes pumping septic tanks difficult. Without the right strategic approach, a septic hauler might be boxed into a corner, losing out on profits and pride (reputation) when showing up to pump tanks that cannot even be accessed. Haulers may even be unable to provide services for a time. How's a hauler to do damage control?

A quick internet search of “frozen septic tank,” or “frozen septic tank lid,” or something of the like will yield of a variety of results. I encountered plausible ideas such as **(1) homemade steam boxes** or **(2) thermal blankets** placed over where the tank lid is located. These solutions may take some time, but at least they don't make a mess like **(3) hot water** can, poured directly over where the lid is located. If the day is particularly cold, “icy” and “will freeze over again (very) soon” come to mind.

In addition to these possible solutions, I also encountered a number of less than sensible solutions. As a freeze prevention measure, put **(4) 50-100 pounds of 46-0-0 Nitrogen Fertilizer Urea** in the tank. Really? Combating ice with concentrated pollutants? Sounds like a recipe for a failed system, polluted ground water, and highly nutrient dense septage. It also sounds illegal. One crazy, definitely harmful solution involved **(5) termite-based heat** on top of the septic tank (what tank, now?). For a bit of slapstick fun, watch just a little termite in action in the YouTube Video “Firecrackers Detonate Methane and Blow Up the Septic Tank Cover.” Other more commonly mentioned, quick acting solutions included **(6) a propane heater, kerosene heater, or blow torch** to thaw earth and unfreeze a tank lid. The most popular by far, even among locals via phone conversations, was **(7) build a campfire over the septic tank lid**. When there are few options to keep the indoor plumbing operating, desperate and uneducated people will try just about any fix. Likewise, many folks would rather test out these ill-advised solutions than consider, for even a moment, renting a port-a-john for the duration of winter and early spring, and habitually settling in for their morning ritual on a frozen seat cover, with a brisk breeze whipping through the overhead vents, keeping things fresh.

So why should haulers not carry a blow torch or recommend a mid-winter bonfire? See the YouTube video entitled “Septic Tank Explosion Destroys Zephyrhills Home.” Although rare, it really does happen. The probability of violent poop incidences is not based on an individual's past successful experiences using a heat source near flammable gases. It only takes one tank with all of the right conditions to create one very bad experience. Haulers can be liable for property and personal (health-related) damages and lose a solid reputation within a community for so much as suggesting a solution that involves flames. One boom is all it takes. Still need more convincing? Internet search Pumper Magazine's 2016 article “Ka-Boom! Can a Septic Tank Spontaneously Combust?” in which Dr. Jim Anderson covers the flammability of gasses in a septic tank and recommends against smoking (open flame) near septic tanks.

If the majority of solutions listed above to warm frost-ridden ground and frozen tank lids could cause a Larry, Moe, and Curly-style disaster, what can a hauler do or suggest to customers who experience frozen facilities? Help customers beat those winter lavatory woes by setting up a series of safe thawing procedures and acquiring the proper equipment to cure stuck plumbing. Just avoid the open flame!

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Legislative Report for MSTA

Judy Augenstein, Legislative Consultant

March 2018

In Governor Rick Snyder's first budget proposal for the 2011-12 fiscal year he focused on what was the most significant change in taxes and financial structures in nearly two decades. Governor Snyder's 2018 budget proposal took a completely different approach, stressing more the need for improving services for the state and its people. Snyder contends that every dollar spent in the budget request reflects services aimed at making citizen's lives better.

Governor Snyder includes one of the largest increases in per pupil funding in the state's history, a small increase in general welfare benefits which itself is the first such increase in a decade, more funding for the state's highways and an increased effort to boost technical training. Snyder took a strict tone towards the state's debt status. He pointed out that several of his proposals did not incur any new debt in Michigan. The Governor urged legislators to continue paying Michigan's debt down at the same schedule they are now doing so that the person who is elected Governor in 2018 will not have to address a state with debt. Snyder proposed the state pay cash and bond \$112 million for ongoing renovations at the Capitol and new veteran's homes. Governor Snyder's budget included some items he unveiled last week. Snyder proposed an increase in the tipping fee to replace the soon to be depleted Clean Michigan Initiative bond monies approved in 1998 and a fee on water system users to provide a source for water infrastructure needs and another \$26 million for Flint, mostly to pay for the replacement of lead service lines.

SB 763, sponsored by Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba modifies allowable expenditures relative the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The bill has received one hearing by the Senate Natural Resources Committee as did companion Senate Joint Resolution "O". All testifying on behalf of the bill and resolution registered positions of support or neutral, no opposition was registered.

HB 4464, sponsored by Rep. Triston Cole, R-Mancelona was signed into law by Governor Rick Snyder on February 13. The measure is now Public Act 17 of 2018. The law allows a multiple trip permit for all commodity

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haulers and was tailored after Wisconsin law. We experienced many hurdles with navigating the bill through the legislative process, but we stayed focused and kept inching it forward until it completed legislative action and was signed into law.

SB 97, sponsored by Senator Mike Kowall, R-White Lake remains on the House calendar for final action. The bill allows public private partnerships and is a key priority of Governor Rick Snyder. The bill would allow a public authority to issue bonds, notes or other obligations for the purpose of funding an eligible project and authorizes user fees for repayments of those obligations. The bill allegedly does not authorize a public authority to charge or collect tolls on a transportation project. The possibility of toll roads are a key point that kept the bill bottled up in committee for so long and now on the House floor.

The Senate and House Transportation Committees held a joint meeting and heard testimony on the impact of federal regulations on the trucking industry in Michigan. All testified commented on the additional costs and burdens the new ELD's have on haulers and that the situation creates a less safe environment as truckers are pushing to get their daily "haul schedule" done in the mandatory 14 hour requirement. Mike Elenz, member of the Michigan Association of Timbermen and a log hauler shared with the committee the burdens the new ELD's have on his business including making his business less profitable. Ralph Bailey, Michigan Septic Tank Association board member testified how the additional requirements hurt small haulers across the state and emphasized concern about driver and public safety. A representative for 12 Grand Rapids area commodity haulers testified about the huge burden the LED's put on their businesses. Committee Chairmen Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba and Rep. Triston Cole, R-Mancelona are preparing a resolution to forward to the Michigan congressional delegation and President Donald Trump outlining opposition to the new ELD's regulations. Casperson and Cole continue to investigate and research ways to minimize the impact of the regulations.

MSTA continues to work to defeat HB 4438, legislation to allow farmers to provide and transport porta johns and bypass a licensed septic hauler or become a licensed septic hauler. The bill passed the House at record speed and has received one hearing by the Senate Natural Resources Committee. Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba is under intense pressure by the Speaker of the House to report the bill to the full Senate for final consideration. Speaker Tom Leonard, R-DeWitt is a close friend of bill sponsor Rep. Tom Barrett, R-Pottersville who is running for the Senate to replace term limited Senator Rick Jones. MSTA has been actively working with the Michigan Environmental Council and the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center to defeat the bill. MSTA has written letters to the entire Senate, the Senate Natural Resources Committee and letters have been sent to the Lansing State Journal editorial page. We have testified against the bill at every committee meeting. It is important that you contact your senator to urge him/her to oppose the bill ASAP!!!

April 2018

We continue to work to defeat HB 4438, legislation to allow farmers to provide and transport porta johns and bypass a licensed septic hauler. The bill passed the House in a "blink" as sponsor Rep. Tom Barrett, R-Pottersville is the Committee chair. The bill has received one hearing by the Senate Natural Resources Committee and is on hold because of the intense push back by MSTA. We have teamed up with the Michigan Environmental Council and the Michigan Migrant Workers Council and prepared and sent a press release outlining the problems with allowing farmers to ignore important rules and laws when moving and servicing porta johns. Committee

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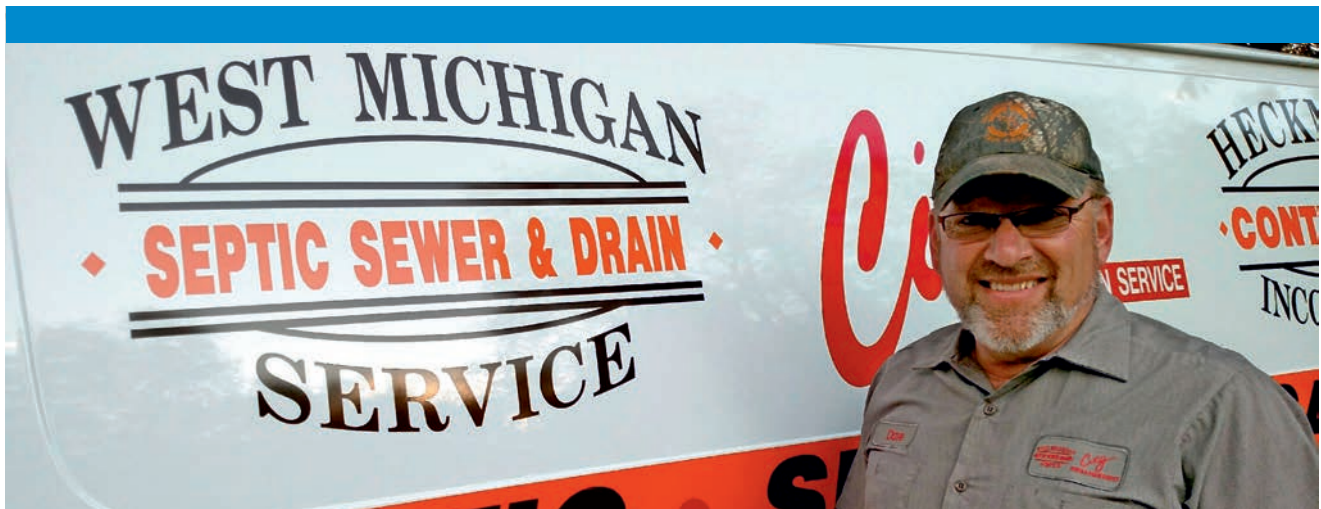
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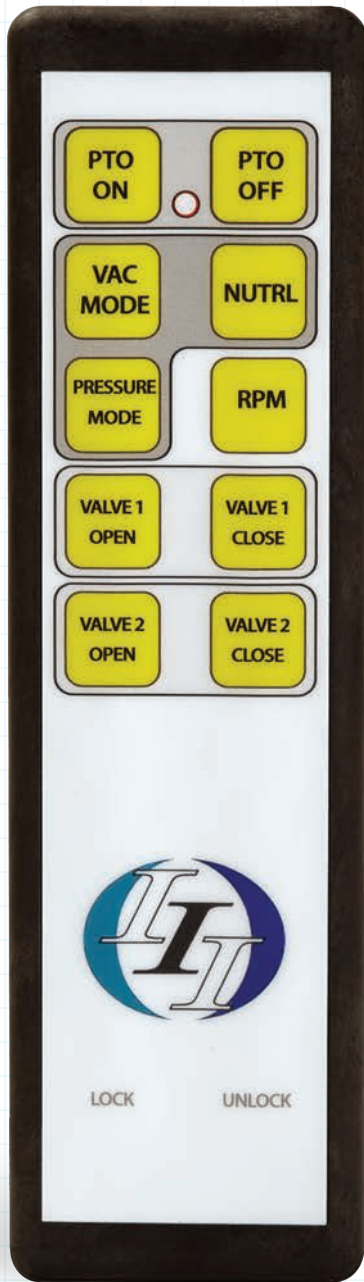
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Chair Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba does not support the bill, but he is under intense pressure by the Speaker of the House to get the bill moved through the senate committee. Senator Phil Pavlov, R-St. Clair vows he will not budge from his position of “opposition”. Pavlov thinks farmers get enough exemptions and he does not like workers being put at possible risk along with putting our food chain at risk. Senator Rebekah Warren, D-Ann arbor is also squarely opposed to the bill for the same reasons. Committee member Senator Jim Stamas, R-Midland has been working on preparing an amendment which will be agreeable to Farm Bureau and MSTA---it is not going well.

The Legislature is on spring recess and when they return 100% of their focus will be the primary campaigns. My plan is to drag this issue out until it is less important than the Senate race for Rep. Tom Barrett. It is anticipated that Rep. Barrett will win the Republican election against Rep. Brett Roberts, but he will then go head to head against Kelly Rossman-McKinney of Delta Township, a longtime Lansing public relations executive with strong democratic connections and money. She has amazing fundraising ability and outmigration from Lansing of Democratic voters to areas like Delta Township and DeWitt. This is the race politic pundits are watching because it could easily flip from Republican to Democratic in a blink.

Legislation creating a Statewide Sanitary Code and a database on where systems are located was introduced in the House the last day of the winter session. Rep. Abdullah Hammoud, D-Dearborn and Rep. Jim Lower, R-Cedar Lake introduced HB 5752 and HB 5753 to improve inspection and maintenance of septic systems. Currently, the state does not define the malfunction or failure of an onsite wastewater treatment system. “The problem is that Michigan lacks basic protections on the issues, Mr. Hammond commented.” We are the only state without protections”.

The bills were referred to the House Natural Resources Committee chaired by Rep. Gary Howell, R-North Branch. The bills are supported by the DEQ as they served as the primary writers of the bills. Dave Snyder and I were involved in one conference call with the DEQ relative the issue last summer. The DEQ held various conference calls with other stakeholders on the issue in their effort to come up with compromise legislation, but the bills continue to be a work in progress. Under the bills, state and local standards, including allowing alternative septic systems on a statewide basis as long as the systems have proper permitting and construction would be created. They would also place a certain trigger on systems for more regular inspections. “When systems fail and are left undetected, we face the consequences” Rep. Lower said. “This plan will provide the framework for a robust inspection process that helps to increase awareness for the trouble that can impact areas, both financially and ecologically, when systems fail. Promoting proper maintenance will be a vehicle to preventing failures.”

May 2018

A super majority of the state Senate is turning over as part of the 2018 election, but a significant shift is about to take place in the state House as well. As it stands today, someone new will be representing at least 44 seats in the state House after the November elections, a 40 percent turnover, despite having a relatively small senior class. Only 23 House members are in their third and last allowable term under the Constitution, but 19 others are by passing their additional possible terms to run for the Senate. Rep. Ed Canfield, R-Sebewaing recently announced

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he is leaving early for personal reasons and the 68th House district is already vacant with Andy Schor D-Lansing leaving to become mayor of Lansing.

The shuffle does not match the last time the House had a large turnover in the 2010 election. At that time, 56 seats opened up, more than half, due to term limits (33), members running for another office (20) and three for other reasons. In 2010, a massive Senate class cleared out of all but eight members. Now, this class is being term limited, leaving only 11 sitting senators interested in running for re-election. The large number of open seats is not a huge advantage for Democrats, but adds a little wind to their back considering Republicans are enjoying majorities in both chambers with the current set-up.

Term limited Senate Majority Floor Leader Mike Kowall, R-White Lake who is now running for Congress, recently reported he is leading the charge in the Senate to re-write the P.A. 51 formula for funding road projects to tilt the dollars away from UP and northern roads to southeast Michigan roads. He agrees that the UP and northern lawmakers are not likely to easily give up their road money and it will be a fight. He has support from Senator Mike Shirkey, R-Clark Lake, who has already been elected by his caucus to serve as the new Senate Majority Leader next year. Senator Shirkey contends that P.A. 51 may be “long in the tooth” as it relates to how communities receive state transportation money, and it agrees there will be push back for northern and UP senators. Senator Shirkey’s comments come after several Macomb, Oakland and Wayne county House members signed onto HB 5706, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Yaroch, R-Richmond that would distribute road money based on “lane miles” as opposed to “road miles”, the argument being that it costs more money to redo a four-lane road than it does to keep up a two lane road. Senator John Brandenburg, R-Harrison Township contends that since southeast Michigan has all the population, all the cars, all the trucks, all the industry, that the monies need to be re-distributed to Southeast Michigan.

Since Governor Rick Snyder has wanted to re-write P.A. 51 since 2011 to re-direct road monies away from the north and to the southeast; and with the mounting support by legislators from the Wayne, Oakland and Macomb areas it is assumed this issue will be a key issue to be visited during the “lame duck” session. Anything and everything can happen during a “lame duck” session. Issues that have been on the back burner for months can suddenly get traction and issues assumed to be moved swiftly can stall. It is important to stay vigilant during the upcoming “lame duck” session. Term limited legislative alliances can change in a “blink” depending on where their career path may lead them.

HB 4438, sponsored by Rep. Tom Barrett, R-Pottersville allows farmers to provide and transport porta johns and bypass a licensed septic hauler and remains on the legislative back burner thanks to our continued and active lobbying. MSTA members, especially our board of directors, continue to grassroots lobby their legislators and I work against the bill every week in Lansing. Senator Phil Pavlov, R-St. Clair continues to not budge from his position of opposition and other Senate committee members have reservations about the bill. Senate Natural Resources Committee Chair, Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba refuses to schedule the bill for further debate until a “compromise” has been reached between the Michigan Farm Bureau and MSTA. We have compromised as far as we can and remain firm to our position that a farmer have a porta john pumped before it travels down a public road.

HB 5752 and 5753, sponsored primarily by Rep. James Lower, R-70 aims to create a statewide sanitary code, but misses the mark in the view of the MSTA executive team. Many health departments oppose the bill, the realtor's support the bill as inspections at the "point of sale" would be eliminated under the bills. A conventional system would be required to be inspected every 10 years while alternative systems would be required to be inspected every 5 years and possibly yearly. The big issues of concern centered around the "point of sale" and funding issues. Under the bill, the DEQ would receive \$1 million dollars for the funding of 3 1/2 new employees for a total of 7 employees. Health Departments would be required to collect a \$25.00 fee to be passed on to the DEQ. There is no way to project how much 45 health departments would collect to cover their "costs" and on top of the \$25.00 DEQ fee. A work group of interested parties was held on April 30 in an effort to hammer out the points of differences, but in my view not much was accomplished. Ralph Bailey, Ken Goike and I represented MSTA. I have canvassed part of the House Natural Resources Committee and have not found any supporters of the bills at this point.

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TECH SHEET

EMC Insurance Companies.

EMC Safe Driver Award Program

To help reduce injuries, damages, and operational costs of motor vehicle accidents, EMC is teaming up with commercial policyholders to recognize drivers for their safe driving habits. Employees of qualifying organizations who are assigned to operate motor vehicles on official business are eligible to participate in this program.

To receive an EMC Safe Driver Award, drivers must complete 12 consecutive months of driving without a preventable accident. Awards range from a certificate for one to four years of safe driving, to a personalized engraved plaque for 30 years of safe driving. The award program is more than a way to reward and recognize drivers with good safety records. The program guidelines also help outline reasonable safe driving expectations for professional drivers.

Program Eligibility

Organizations which have a current commercial auto policy in-force with a member company of EMC Insurance Companies qualify to participate in the Safe Driver Award Program. Each employee of the qualifying organization who is assigned to operate motor vehicles full time or significant portions of their work day on official business is eligible to receive safe driver awards.

Eligible for Award

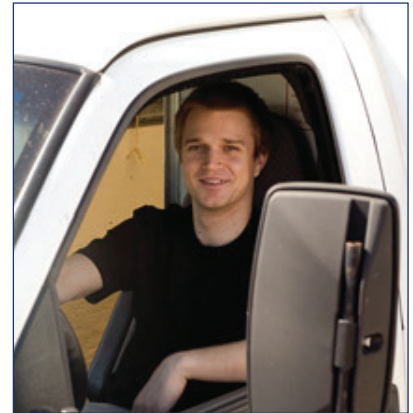
Employees who:

- Are assigned to a full-time position that includes driving an organization's motor vehicle(s).
- Have not been involved in a preventable motor vehicle accident.
- Have not had their driving privileges revoked or suspended.

Ineligible for Award

Employees who:

- Drive only during seasonal or rush periods.
- Drive only to cover during holidays, vacations, or on standby basis.
- Operate privately owned motor vehicles for transportation to and from work.
- Are contract personnel not employed by the sponsoring organization.
- Drive only at intermittent times.



Continued

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Safe Driver Awards

Current policyholders of EMC Insurance Companies can request Safe Driver Awards by completing the Application for Safe Driver Awards form on our website at www.EMCIns.com. Safe Driver Awards are as follows:

- 1-4 years of Safe Driving: Custom Certificate
- 5 years: Safe Driving Lapel Pin
- 6-9 years: Custom Certificate (also given annually between five-year achievement awards)
- 10 years: Engraved Key Chain
- 15 years: Custom Printed Pen
- 20 years: Custom Printed Flashlight
- 25 years: Custom Printed Stainless Steel Mug
- 30 years: Personalized Engraved Plaque
- 35 years: Personalized Engraved Acrylic Award
- Over 35 years: Awards for individuals with over 35 years of safe driving will be arranged by EMC Insurance Companies.

Records and Reports

Organizations requesting EMC Safe Driver Awards must certify that the awards are based on accurate records of each driver's performance. Guesswork or dependence on memory is not acceptable. Complete and accurate reports should be used to determine whether a driver is eligible for an award. Accident reports are recommended when an organization's driver is involved in a motor vehicle accident that results in death, injury, or property damage. Every effort should be made to secure prompt, accurate information on every accident. Accident reporting also has several side benefits to drivers and supervisors. Complete and accurate reports can help management determine where drivers are experiencing problems so that additional efforts can be introduced to reduce the risk of accidents.

For Additional Information

EMC Insurance Companies: www.emcins.com

- Safety Talks
- Loss Prevention Information Manual – Fleet Safety
- Technical Information Sheets

Determining Accident Preventability

Accidents involve many factors, so it is very difficult to set hard and fast rules for classifying them as preventable or non-preventable 100% of the time. The driver's supervisor or organization's management must make the final determination. In making these decisions, each organization must determine the standard for safe driving performance. Mediocrity becomes the norm if standards of safe driving are lax. Drivers respect a strict interpretation of the rules if they are enforced in a consistent and impartial manner. Additional information about determining preventability of accidents is available in the Safe Driver Awards section at www.EMCIns.com.

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