

Fall 2019



SepticSmart Week is September 16-20, 2019

EPA's SepticSmart Program educates homeowners about proper septic system care and maintenance all year long. In addition, it serves as an online resource for industry practitioners, local governments, and community organizations, providing access to tools to educate clients and residents. Did you know that SepticSmart Week takes place September 16-20, 2019? You can do your part to help educate the public on proper septic care with door hangers, mail inserts, postcards and more.

SAVE THE DATE!
SepticSmart Week 2019
September 16-20, 2019

Start early!

SepticSmart Week is an annual event focused on educating homeowners and communities on the proper care and maintenance of their septic systems.

Visit www.epa.gov/septic for more resources and information about SepticSmart Week 2019.

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EPA

The graphic features a cartoon character named SAM, a man with glasses, a blue cap with the septicSMART logo, a green shirt with a "SAM" name tag, and yellow gloves. He is pointing towards the text. In the background, there is a white picket fence and a green tree. A circular inset on the right shows SAM holding a clipboard and a checkmark, with the text "SepticSmart Week • September 16-20, 2019" around it.

To get mail inserts and postcards to hand out to your customers, go to the MSTA website at www.msta.biz and click on RESOURCES at the top and then click on PROMOTE A CLEAN SEPTIC SYSTEM.

Thank you in advance for promoting SepticSmart Week 2019 by educating the public about the importance of our industry!



Fall Board Meeting and Educational Classes
Saturday, October 19, 2019
9:00am – 3:00pm (time is tentative)
Mount Pleasant, MI

Please consider joining us for the MSTA Fall Meeting on Saturday, October 19 in Mount Pleasant, hosted by General Insurance Agency. Coffee, Donuts and Networking starts at 9:00am with the business meeting to follow from 9:30am to 11:30am.

The 6th Annual Chili Cookoff will begin at 11:30pm. We encourage you bring your best pot of chili to be shared and used in the competition against others who think their chili is the best too. Who said a little friendly competition isn't fun? Be sure to sign up for this competition when signing up for the meeting or call Karlyn Wickham at 989-808-8648.

The educational classes will begin following lunch. An agenda will be emailed as soon as it becomes available, as well as be on the EGLE (Formerly MDEQ) website. The number of CSE's you will receive is dependent on the agenda and State of Michigan approval.

Registration information will be sent to you via email very soon as well as on the MSTA Website at www.msta.biz. If you don't get an email, but want to sign up please contact Karlyn Wickham at 989-808-8648. The price for members is FREE. The price for non-members is \$100.

Please mark this on your calendars and plan for a day of networking, education and good food!

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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Hello to all,

I would like to first thank everyone for the kind words and support after my father's passing. This was very sudden and during my mother's sickness. My dad passed on July 4th, at home, just the way he would have wanted to. He was 86 years old and had a very full life. He will be missed by all of his family and friends.

On to the business at hand. Hard to believe we are looking at the fall season. I hope you all had a good summer and the chance to enjoy the many things to do in Michigan during the summer time. I did get a chance to spend a little time in the U.P. again and as always enjoy camping and hiking up there.

MSTA is in the process of planning the fall meeting and the next year's Michigan Onsite Wastewater Conference. We are also looking into some support advertising to promote Septic Smart Week which the state is promoting for septic tank awareness. We are looking to do billboard type advertising throughout the state. Look for us when you are driving down your side of the state. We are hoping this will boost the awareness of septic system care and maintenance. I also would like to do advertising like this in the future to promote the portable restroom businesses in our association. So if you have an idea on how to do this, pass on your idea to one of us. We would appreciate it.

I would like to take this time to ask for your support to the MSTA Pac Fund. The "sanitary code" issue is being tossed around the capital again. As always, Judy Augenstein, our Legislative Consultant, is being approached often to support a Senator or Representative. Judy is very good at weeding out the congressman we should support and the ones we should not. So if you could write a personal check to "MSTA Pac Fund" it will be used for legislative issues that only pertain to our industry. Thank you.

Have a great fall season and hope to see you all at our Fall meeting in Mt. Pleasant.

Submitted by:

Dave W. Snyder (MSTA President)

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69TH MICHIGAN ON-SITE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL CONFERENCE



Please mark your calendar for **January 14-16, 2020** (Tuesday – Thursday) for the 69th Michigan On-Site Wastewater Disposal Conference. The conference will be held once again at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, MI. The 2019 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 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 2020 conference are:

- Keynote (Topic TBA)
- Portable Restroom Panel Discussion
- MDEQ Question & Answer Session
- MDEQ Onsite Wastewater Program Sessions
- Michigan Truck Safety Session
- Michigan Truck Safety Simulator
- MIOSHA SET Confined Space/Excavation Safety
- Putting Onsite Systems on Bedrock
- Innovative Septic System Accessories
- Finding Human Waste in Wastewater Systems
- Ask the Pumper
- Integrity of the Industry
- Pumper Stories
- The Septage Industry in Indiana
- Installers Workshop
- Washington Onsite Sewage Association
- CDL Documents Requirements/Monitoring
- Troubleshooting Control Panels
- Alternative Sewer Collection
- Fenner Nature Center Field Trip
- Vendor Product Showcase Session
- Soils / Textures Workshop
- High Risk Erosion Areas and Septic Systems
- Flooding and How Pumpers/Health Departments deal with it
- Statewide Sanitary Code Session

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Round Table Discussions (including):

1. Portable Restroom Discussion
2. Health Care Reform Update
3. Understanding Your Credit Card Processing Statement and What You Are Paying
4. Pumper Stories
5. Processing Liquid Waste in the City & the Country
6. Proper Techniques for Solvent Welding Plastic Joints
7. Many more TBA

The next wastewater conference planning meeting is scheduled after the fall newsletter goes to print. Please contact one of the MSTA planning committee members with suggestions of what you would like to see at the 2020 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), and Michigan State University (MSU), 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)*



Karlyn Wickham
MSTA Executive Officer

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:

Septic Postcards

The following postcards can be used FREE of CHARGE to promote proper septic system maintenance:

[Think at the Sink Postcard](#)

[Don't Overload the Commode Postcard](#)

[Don't Strain Your Drain Postcard](#)

[Keep it Clean Postcard](#)

[Protect it and Inspect it Postcard](#)

[Pump Your Tank Postcard](#)

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MSTA Annual Raffle Tickets On Sale Now

We are happy to be hosting the 7th Annual Raffle at the MSTA Banquet during the 2020 Onsite Wastewater Conference in January. Below is a list of prizes you could win:

- 1st: Ruger GoWild 450 Bushmaster or \$750 Cash
- 2nd: SigSaver 365 9mm Pistol or \$450 Cash
- 3rd: Winchester XPR 270 or \$400 Cash
- 4th: TriStar O/U 12 Gauge Setter or \$400 Cash
- 5th: Winchester SXP 12 Gauge 3 1/2 Camopump or \$300 Cash
- 6th: Traditions Pursuit Muzzleloader 50 cal or \$200 Cash
- 7th: Savage B-Mag 17 WSM or \$175 Cash
- 8th: Ruger LCPII 380 Pistol (black) or \$150 Cash

2019 Raffle Ticket Sponsor:

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Sincerely,

MSTA Raffle Committee

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Legislative Report for MSTA

Judy Augenstein, Legislative Consultant



MSTA May 2019

DGov. Gretchen Whitmer continues to say she will not sign any Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 spending plan that doesn't include a road-funding piece, a response to House and Senate Republicans ranking road funding third on their 2019 session priority list behind auto-insurance reform and the budget.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake) has stated that the road funding issue and the budget process are separate, as far as the Senate Republicans are concerned. Governor Whitmer said holding out for additional road funding will mean "It'll be a long summer."

"People need to prepare to work here and stay here until the job is done because that budget is absolutely interlinked," Whitmer said. "Our ability to fund our

education system, to clean up drinking water is linked with our ability to rebuild roads in this state. So, I'm not signing anything until it's all done together."

"I am serious about it. The people of the state elected me because I believe they want me to fix the damn roads. They want honesty in budgeting. They want real solutions, not half measures and shell games and that's exactly what I put on the table."

An answer doesn't have to be a 45-cent-a-gallon gas tax, she stated. If their alternative gets the state \$2.5 billion in additional funding on a yearly basis for the next 10 years, "I'm all ears. But until then, let's get serious about talking about my budget and getting it passed to fix these problems."

The scenario Whitmer is trying to head off is the Republicans sending her an FY 2020 spending plan with possibly some additional road-funding dollars, but nothing close to \$2.5 billion. Under the 2015 road-funding plan, the state is required to put in \$325 million in additional income tax money into the roads.

Speaker of the House Lee Chatfield (R-Levering) has noted, "We'd all be a lot further down the road on this issue if the Governor had delivered a workable plan, or at least a realistic starting point. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. As it is, conversations are continuing now."

Chatfield commented, "We are currently spending a record amount on roads and are serious about further investing the right amount to fix the problem. But if that doesn't qualify as a fix, I could put her gas tax hike on the board and watch it fail."

Did you know that during this last campaign cycle 8 Senate races cost \$2 million and 8 House races cost \$1 million???????

Spending in Michigan legislative races in 2018 hit record high levels, continuing the gradual upward slope of more money being sunk into control for the House and the Senate, according to a new analysis by the Michigan Campaign Finance Network. In the 38 Senate races open last year, eight races in which the total combined spending was \$2 million or more. In the 110 House races, eight races drew more than \$1 million.

Overall, \$27.6 million was spent on all House races, more than \$27 million in 2016, \$25.4 million in 2014 and \$24.3 million in 2012. Some \$20 million was spent for Senate seats this last cycle. The House Republican Campaign

(continued on page 13)

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Committee's top donors over 2017 - 2018 were members of West Michigan's DeVos family, who gave \$440,000, members of the Kennedy family, who gave \$160,000 and members of the Secchia family, who gave \$120,000. The House Democratic Fund received \$135,000 from the Democratic State Central Committee, the United auto workers Michigan Voluntary PAC \$80,000 and the Michigan Education Association PAC \$80,000. Campaigns in Michigan have increasingly become more expensive each cycle due primarily to the "term limit law" requiring candidates to constantly be campaigning.

MSTA June 2019

Michigan voters are equally concerned about no-fault auto insurance reform and fixing the roads, according to a new commissioned survey.

"The GOP is correct in tie-barring auto insurance and roads," said Ed Sarpolus of Target Insyght, who conducted the poll. "They are the top two issues at 23% each.

Asked "What issues should state senators and state representatives in Lansing focus on as their number one priority this year? Voters responded: Both.

Here's how the issues lined up:

- Infrastructure, roads and bridges -- 23%
- Auto insurance reform -- 23%
- Education -- 14%
- Healthcare -- 10%
- Taxes and government spending -- 9%
- Economy and jobs -- 5%
- Undecided -- 14%

On a statewide basis, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has a total job approval rating of 51% -- (15% excellent, 36% good). Some 15% rate the job Whitmer is doing as "just fair" while 18% describe her handling of the job so far as "poor." A total of 17% were undecided.

While feeling positive overall about the job the governor is doing, only 39% of likely state voters feel President Donald Trump is handling his job well.

Of that, 29% think Trump is doing an excellent job, 10% feel he is doing a good job; 8% just fair, 48% believe he is doing a poor job and 5% have no opinion.

Not surprisingly, party identification clearly impacted how voters view Whitmer and Trump.

A total of 66% of Republicans ranked Trump's job performance as "excellent" while only 3% felt Whitmer was doing an "excellent" job.

For Whitmer, 26% of Democrats said she was doing an "excellent" job and 59 percent said she was doing a "good job." On Trump, only 2% of Democrats said he was doing an excellent job, and 2% said he was doing a good job.

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Rep. James Lower, R-Greenville has announced he will challenge U.S. Rep. Justin Amash in the 3rd Congressional District Republican primary. Amash has “tweeted” that President Donald Trump had committed “impeachment offenses.” Rep. Lower says he has been organizing his campaign for the past two months and planned to announce around July 4, but moved up his timetable after Congressman Amash tweeted that Attorney General Barr deliberately misrepresented the Mueller report on the Trump investigation into Russian collusion.

Rep. Lower says he needs at least \$1 million to beat Amash and believes he can raise that amount and more. Rep. Lower held a fundraiser event recently in Lansing which MSTA did not participate. Those participating in the Lansing event surely felt they were doing so to assist with his re-election to the State House. He has appeared to lose interest in working on legislation to create a Statewide Sanitary Code bill and now I think we know why. I am trying to identify which legislator the Office of the Governor is trying to identify as a possible sponsor and will be meeting with Governor Whitmer’s environmental policy adviser this week.

MSTA July 2019

Governor Gretchen Whitmer has accused legislative Republicans of not having presented responsible alternatives to her proposed budget and long-term road funding plans urging lawmakers to return to Lansing to begin serious negotiations on both topics and not just be in session 3 minutes, or one minute or even 30 seconds a day as the Senate did recently.

Governor Whitmer contends she is the only one who has put forward comprehensive plans forward to address the budget and repairing the state’s crumbling infrastructure. She said the Republican-controlled Legislature should introduce credible alternatives to allow for serious negotiations to begin; and also return from their summer recess for more than a few minutes a day just to prevent the Governor from calling them to Lansing for a special session to address the road and budget issue. Ms. Whitmer went on to call many of the proposals being suggested by legislative Republicans as phony ones, specifically calling a House Republican proposal to look at the possibility of seeking proposals for selling state assets such as bridges a “joke.” “Selling bridges is a joke and it’s a dangerous joke because it’s a dangerous situation that we’re confronting,” Ms. Whitmer said. “Selling the Blue Water Bridge is insulting and its baloney.”

No commitment has yet been made by House or Senate Democrats, on the governor’s proposed 45-cent per gallon fuel tax increase to generate \$2.5 billion annually she says is needed to fund road repairs, a proposal that has been dead on arrival with majority Republicans in both chambers. Governor Whitmer also said those in other professions do not leave for vacation before their work is done, so lawmakers should not do so either.

Gideon D’Assandro, spokesperson for House Speaker Lee Chatfield (R-Levering), disputed the Governor’s remarks, saying the House has put forward a responsible budget proposal that provides more funding for top priorities including roads and education. The Speaker’s spokesperson said appropriations members are reviewing the budgets to reconcile differences and will engage with the Governor once that work is concluded.

House Republicans moved legislation that assumes a dedicated transportation fuel tax would eventually replace the 6 percent sales tax currently collected on fuel purchases. The plan assumes this total to be \$542.5 million. Concerns from Democrats opposed to such a move are that it would lead to a significant hit to schools and local governments.

House Speaker Lee Chatfield (R-Levering) has said for months that all fuel tax funds should go toward roads. He called taking the sales tax out of what is charged at the pump and replacing it with a revenue-neutral gas tax would be a responsible first step in providing additional road funding.

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Amber McCann, spokesperson for Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake), said all ideas are on the table for consideration for road funding. “Senators are continuing to work on a roads plan,” Ms. McCann said. Sources said among the ideas being studied at Mr. Shirkey’s request include potentially delaying the state’s repayment of its long-term debt or securitizing the state’s pension funds.

Another possibility being considered, according to sources, is tying a debt repayment delay to some level of increase in the fuel tax, but far short of Ms. Whitmer’s fuel tax proposal. House Republicans are at this point cool to the idea of any fuel tax increase.

Delaying the repayment of the state’s long-term debt that currently would be paid off in 2038 would provide about \$1 billion every fiscal year for as long as the road funding proposal would last. Securitizing the state’s five pension plans would reportedly be more difficult. The plans had a combined net value of \$72.4 billion.

Democrats have unveiled a road plan which they said were ideas to add to the ongoing discussions over additional funding needed to repair crumbling infrastructure. House Democrats are proposing a \$1.2 billion plan that would raise the corporate income tax by 2.5 percentage points to 8.5 percent, implement a flow-through parity tax of 4.25 percent and repeal the pension tax. Included in the plan is 6-cents per mile traveled charge for heavy trucks of 26,000 pounds or more and to create a bridge roll program for trucks, similar to one in place in Rhode Island.

The plan would also create a Fixing Michigan Roads Fund for placement of additional Corporate Income Tax and vehicle miles traveled revenue from heavy trucks. Ms. Whitmer said the House Democrats’ ideas could be workable within a framework of a final roads plan.

The Legislature has scheduled short work days throughout July and August.

MSTA August 2019

Governor Gretchen Whitmer continues to press for action on road funding as the linchpin to her proposed 2019-20 budget, but the Republican led legislature has moved forward without a road plan included in their budget plan. The Governor has all but promised to veto legislative budget proposals that do not include a specific road funding plan. The Senate has chosen to accelerate the phase in of the 2015 road funding package by dedicating a full \$600 million in general fund revenue to roads a year early, compared to the original target of dedicating \$325 million in general fund revenue to roads in the 2020 budget.

Rep. Abdullah, D-Dearborn, co-sponsor of the two bill proposal to create a Statewide Sanitary code last session will become the primary sponsor of a new effort this session. The proposal died during the “lame duck” session last year for various reasons including unknown costs to health departments. Rep. Hammoud and his chief of staff, Joe Sullivan would like MSTA to be actively engaged in the effort. Ken Goike worked with Joe Sullivan when he was staff to former Rep. Julie Plawecki who passed away while hiking with her daughter out west. Fortunately, for MSTA, Ken had schooled Rep. Plawecki and her staff on important points to be included in a Statewide Sanitary Code so through Ken, MSTA has instant credibility with Rep. Hammoud. Ken has agreed to attend necessary work group meetings and I am confident Ralph Bailey will be willing to do the same.

I shared with Kara Cook, Environmental Policy Director to Governor Whitmer and Jeremy Hoeh, DEQ my conversations with staff to Rep. Hammoud as the last time I spoke to them they were still searching for a sponsor.

I attended a fundraiser event on Wednesday, July 17 for Rep. Hammoud on behalf of MSTA and shared with him our desire to assist in his effort to address a Statewide Sanitary Code.

MSTA points of interest for a Statewide Sanitary Code include, but not limited to:

- 1) Inspection and pump out at point of sale.
- 2) Consistent rules and regulations for health departments.
- 3) Clear definition of failure.
- 4) Standards for registered inspectors needs to be clearly state in law.
- 5) Technical Advisory committee “must” include a licensed hauler or installer.
- 6) Clearly state how the state is going to monitor inspections.
- 7) Clear penalties for noncompliance of inspections.

Judy Augenstein
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Puns for Educated Minds

1. The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian
3. She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
4. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
5. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
6. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
7. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
8. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
9. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
10. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
11. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
12. Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other: 'You stay here; I'll go on a head.'
13. I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.
14. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: 'Keep off the Grass.'
15. The midget fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
16. The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
17. A backward poet writes inverse.
18. In a democracy it's your vote that counts. In feudalism it's your count that votes.
19. When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion.
20. If you jumped off the bridge in Paris , you'd be in Seine .
21. A vulture boards an airplane, carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at him and says, 'I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger.'
22. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says 'Dam!'
23. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
24. Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, 'I've lost my electron.' The other says 'Are you sure?' The first replies, 'Yes, I'm positive.'
25. Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal. His goal: transcendental medication.
26. There was the person who sent ten puns to friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.



**REMEMBER WHEN YOU COULD REFER
TO YOUR KNEES AS RIGHT AND LEFT?**



**INSTEAD OF GOOD AND BAD.
AH GOOD TIMES, EH!**

You know you're gettin'
OLD when you
can't walk
past a
bathroom
without
thinking,
"I may as
well pee
while I'm here."



MSTA PAC Update

We are continuing to fight for legislative issues that benefit MSTA members. Your donation to the PAC Fund will help tremendously in these efforts! If you would like to donate, a “personal check” (not a company check) should be made out to: MSTA PAC Fund.

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