



MEMORANDUM

November 19, 2013

SUBJECT: A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems for Tribal Communities

FROM: Andrew D. Sawyers, Ph.D., Director
Office of Wastewater Management (OWM)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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Captain Dana Baer, Acting Director
Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction
Office of Environmental Health and Engineering
Indian Health Service (IHS)

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TO: IHS Area Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction Directors and
EPA Regional Water Division Directors (Regions 1, 2, & 4-10)

Last year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced its SepticSmart homeowner awareness and education initiative to educate homeowners about the routine care and maintenance that is needed to protect their septic systems. SepticSmart resources include an Outreach Toolkit to help local governments and communities launch successful homeowner education programs and *A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems*, with detailed care and maintenance information. More recently, EPA and IHS are pleased to have cooperatively developed *A Homeowner's Guide to Septic Systems for Tribal Communities*, a tailored version of the original homeowner's guide that more accurately reflects tribal communities' needs.

The homeowner's guide for tribal communities is available at <http://www.epa.gov/septicSMART>, where a wealth of consumer-friendly information can be found for homeowners about protecting their property, their health, and the surrounding environment by ensuring that their septic systems function properly and are correctly maintained. This guide for tribal communities can also be found on EPA's Clean Water Indian Set Aside website at <http://www.epa.gov/cwisa>.

IHS and EPA encourage you to let homeowners in your communities know that these materials are available. Please take some time to explore the website and consider how the materials could be used in your community to promote responsible septic tank ownership to protect public health and the environment.