



Mason County's On-Site Sewage System Management Plan

March 31, 2008

Progress Report

Project Title: **Implementation Grant**

Department Address: Onsite Program
Washington State Department of Health
101 Israel Rd. SE, P.O. Box 47890
Olympia, Washington, 98504-7890

Department Project Manager: Laura Homan
Laura.Homan@DOH.WA.GOV

Prepared by:

Mason County Public Health
Environmental Health
P O Box 1666
Shelton WA 98584

Cindy Waite, Onsite Septic Program Lead
Penny Orth, Environmental Health Specialist

Activities from January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2008

Task 1:

Enhance Operation & Maintenance database management software (Carmody) to improve the functionality of searching and reporting features in the system, develop documentation and improve Operation and Maintenance Program activities and procedures.

Carmody Enhancements:

The *Compliance Report*, a software upgrade, was developed by Carmody staff and added to the Mason County O&M software reporting options. The new report allows the user to select from a number of filtering options such as Watershed, Study Area or River/Stream (areas previously defined by Water Quality Program studies). In addition, a powerful feature was included which allows staff to provide a user-defined list of parcels for which to report data. We envision this feature will allow Mason County's O&M Program database to support requests for septic and maintenance data for customized lists of parcels from programs within the Health Department and other interested groups.

Operation & Maintenance Program Standard Operating Procedures

A draft of the standard operating procedures for the O&M program has been started. Further editing and additional sections will continue in the next few months. As we evaluate our O&M Program, we are changing procedures to maximize our educational outreach and create more efficiency in our data management. A copy of work completed is attached.

Permitting and Case Management Software Enhancements

Data from Mason County's TideMark permitting software is downloaded and electronically transferred to the O&M database for new septic installations and repairs. Several fields of information in Tidemark were modified to enhance data available for this download. Changes in fields and drop-down box options allow us to assign more appropriate maintenance schedules in septic system maintenance. Examples are creating a distinction between Table 9 repairs and other repairs, tank only replacements and RV holding tanks. The list of proprietary devices was expanded. Community and shared drainfields are now labeled. See the attached display of the field and drop-down box options made to TideMark.

Community Drainfields

To date, 29 community drainfields have been identified and coded appropriately in the Carmody O&M database. Work will continue to identify community drainfields. Contacts will be identified for each system. Annual maintenance will be required by a certified Operation and Maintenance Specialist.

General O&M Data Maintenance

In preparation for the mass educational mailing discussed below, all parcels in the O&M database were downloaded. With all O&M Program mailings to homeowners, parcel number matches are used to select current owners and their mailing addresses from the County Assessor's data at the time mailings are prepared. The mass mailing download from the assessor's data revealed about 300 parcels in the O&M database that were no longer valid parcel numbers due to short plats, parcel combinations or data entry errors. This provided an opportunity to edit the database that will increase our efficiency to send maintenance reminders to our septic system owners.

Task 2:

Raise public awareness and understanding about onsite septic operation and maintenance and the positive effect ongoing maintenance has on the environment including health, water quality, local economy, and septic system longevity and viability

Septic System User's Manual

Mason County Public Health's *Septic System User's Manual* was edited from a previous edition. The edited version was added to the Mason County Public Health Web Page. Ten thousand were printed in anticipation of requests from a mass educational mailing scheduled for the end of May. A copy of the new User's Manual is included.

Maintenance Reminder Mailings

In February, 700 reminders that maintenance is due were sent to homeowners for:

- Aerobic Treatment Units
- Glendons
- Recirculating Gravel Filters
- Sub-surface Drip

In March, 580 notices were sent to homeowners with service reports on the Maintenance Verification Report. These are forms with a tear off response card requesting information about how the issue stated on the pumper report or O&M specialist report was resolved. These mailings generate many phone calls providing the opportunity to discuss repair options and provide septic maintenance education.

Approximately 10,000 maintenance reminders will be sent to conventional system owners in the next three months.

Preparation for Mass Educational Mailing

Mason County Public Health has contracted with an advertising agency to design an Operation and Maintenance educational brochure and a local media blitz to create awareness for the value of maintaining septic systems. A brochure will be sent to over 24,000 septic system owners at the end of May. In addition, 30-second radio spots will run 2x per day for 14 days on Shelton's KMAS radio station. Ads about the brochure and septic maintenance will run in the Shelton Journal, the Shopper's Weekly, The North Bay Review and the Kitsap Sun prior to the mailing.

Mason County Business Expo

Mason County Public Health plans to have an exhibit about Operation and Maintenance at the Mason County Business Expo, an all day well-attended annual event on May 15th in Shelton.

O&M Workshop

In cooperation with WSU Extension, Mason County will present an O&M workshop to the public on April 19th, 2008

Mason County Consolidated Contract # C14956
On-Site Marine Recovery Area Project
Quarterly Update
January-March 2008

Task 1 Coordination and updates of implementation work

During the first quarter of 2008 MCPH held 3 regular Oakland Bay meetings, and distributed meeting notes and monthly update on sampling activities. A new matrix for tracking sanitary survey/dye trace progress in the focus areas was developed at the request of the group and better maps of focus areas and sample sites have also been developed. 3 monthly updates will have been sent to the group by the end of the quarter. MCPH updated their portion of the matrix.

Task 2 District Development

MCPH has almost completed all of the tasks necessary to set up the special purpose governance needed for a Shellfish Protection District. The county commissioners are scheduled to formally create the Oakland Bay Clean Water District Board and set up the Oakland Bay Clean Water District Advisory Committee as advisors to the board shortly after the end of the quarter. At that time the current Oakland Bay Shellfish Response Committee will become the Oakland Bay Clean Water District Advisory Committee. MCPH has also developed by-laws for the Oakland Bay Advisory Committee. They have been finalized and approved by the committee.

MCPH attended 2 education subcommittee meetings and contributed to the TWG grant proposal. We also hosted one county interdepartmental meeting on non-point pollution ordinance coordination and attended 2 stormwater project coordination meetings.

Task 3 Identify On-site Sewage System Sources

MCPH is currently developing a QAPP for the shoreline sanitary surveys. The QAPP will incorporate the MCPH water quality SOP's into a protocol that addresses the issues of the Oakland Bay Marine Recovery Area.

One dye trace has been completed currently and about 40 samples have been collected in known degraded areas.

Some equipment has been purchase and research has been done on the rest of the equipment needed for the surveys. It is anticipated that equipment purchasing will be completed shortly.

Task 4 “Water Quality Education”- **Submitted by WSU**

During this first quarter of 2008 we partnered with the Squaxin Island Tribe, Mason County Public Health, the Mason Conservation District and Sea Grant to submit a major multi-year grant proposal to the EPA’s Targeted Watershed Grants Program. We should be notified on our application before the end of the first quarter. If successful this funding would assist and enhance our efforts on public engagement and education in the Oakland Bay Watershed.

In addition to the grant proposal we also attended several meetings for the South Sound Action Area hosted by the Puget Sound Partnership of which the Oakland Bay Watershed is a part. This action area core group is organizing and inventorying current programs underway, identifying gaps and will eventually be prioritizing this into an action agenda. These meeting included one South Sound Action Area Core Group Meeting, one ECO (Education, Communication and Outreach) Meeting for development of a sound wide education strategy, and the South Sound Puget Sound Partnership Action Area Workshop at The Evergreen State College which gave local experts the opportunity to weigh in on local watershed issues, review the inventory and provide feedback.

We also hosted two Education and Outreach Sub-committee meetings in addition to attending the Oakland Bay Shellfish Closure Response (SCR) meetings. Education and Outreach Sub-committee Meetings have focused on planning and coordination of education events (and their advertisement) for residents including Earth Week events in partnership with many organizations (including Mason County, Mason Conservation District, City of Shelton, Taylor Shellfish, Olympic College etc). Materials for an Oakland Bay booth are being gathered and will include scientific posters being presented at the South Sound Science Symposium on March 27th.

We are scoping out the possibility of hosting an Open House at Pioneer school in early June to update the community as well. We also briefed the Pioneer School Board on our efforts with the assistance of Janis Snoey (resident and SCR member) and the Mason Conservation District). Erica Guttman of WSU Thurston Extension and the Native Plant Salvage Project and Paul Feenan of WSU Thurston Extension presented to a community workshop in early March on Composting and Raingardens.

We have also been working on a template and gathering content to launch a Mason County Oakland Bay Clean Water Website. So far we have gathered links and a local contact sheet as well some of the scientific data to post online. This will be reviewed by the SCR group before being posted.

For the second quarter we are planning a variety of Earth Week events that will focus on Oakland Bay: a Septic System Operation and Maintenance workshop for residents in partnership with MCPH, a Shorelines Workshop for real estate professionals including a field trip to Oakland Bay and continued work on website content.