



## COWRA's 2108 Septic Courses



**CONNECTICUT ONSITE WASTEWATER RECYCLING ASSOCIATION INC.  
SUPPORTING CONNECTICUT AND OUR ENVIRONMENT**

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### Summer 2018

## Letter from the President

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Dear COWRA Members,

I hope all of you had an uneventful winter and are all doing well and enjoying the better weather.

In January 2018 the Public Health Code was updated. Members can find the updated Technical Standard on the State website at: [www.ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov) or on the COWRA website at [www.cowra-online.org](http://www.cowra-online.org), see the (From the State Page), for this information. Please make sure you make note of those changes. There were also changes made in March of this year regarding Alternative Treatment Septic Systems. That information can be found in this newsletter.

We ask members to observe SepticSmart week 2018; see page 2 for information.

Best,  
Frank Talarico

## NEW MEMBER PROFILES COWRA WELCOMES

**Wilfred Sullivan** joined us. Wilfred is the owner of Boss Driveway Sealers and Paving. His company serves both residential and commercial customers. Boss driveway Sealers and Paving is located in North Branford Connecticut. For more information you can contact Wilfred at: [bossdrivewaysealers@gmail.com](mailto:bossdrivewaysealers@gmail.com)

COWRA Brochures are available to our Members at \$ 50.00 per 100, including shipping.

**Matthew Szydlo** of **Designs & Engineered Solutions, LLC** joined us. Matthews Company is located in Harwinton, CT. Consulting, Design, Analysis and Inspections are at the center of Matthew's Company. Their services include: footings, foundations, retaining walls, sheet piles, timber framing, light-gauge metal framing, insulated panels, structural steel, scaffolding, and masonry. Designs & Engineered Solutions provides inspections and analysis for new and existing structures. They also provide insurance and forensic investigation. Matthew specializes in combining engineering detail with artistic and ingenious creativity. Matthew was a student in our 2018 Septic Installer course. To learn more about Matthew's company please contact him at. [matthewszydlo@gmail.com](mailto:matthewszydlo@gmail.com).

## NEW MEMBERS PROFILE CONTINUED



**Jon Piela** joined us from **Eastern Waterproofing Co. Inc.** Jon was a student in COWRA's 2018 Installer Course. Jon's company is a

family owned and operated Connecticut small business that has been operating since 1976. Eastern Waterproofing are specialists in water-proofing but also offer a wide range of services that also include: drainage, site work, septic installation, sewer line services, water work and concrete work. Jon's company is dedicated to quality and cost control with a hands-on owner philosophy to guarantee the best services available. Eastern Waterproofing is located in South Windsor. For more information about Jon's company contact him on the web at: [www.easternwaterproofing.com](http://www.easternwaterproofing.com)



**Dan Mackin** owner of Dan Mackin Construction LLC joined us. Dan formed the company in 1998, after working many years in the trade. They are a diverse site work and excavation company that is capable of

doing any type of site work. His company has the equipment necessary to accomplish any job. His services include site-work, septic installation, demolition, foundation, commercial and industrial work. Dan Mackin Construction is located, in Griswold CT. To learn more about Dan's company and services visit him on the web at: [www.danmackinconstruction.com](http://www.danmackinconstruction.com).



**Scott Moore** of Eljen Corporation joined us. Eljen has been a long time member of COWRA and has generously supporting our Annual Meetings. Eljen is the

manufacturer of the Eljen Mantis 536-8 and the DW Systems. The Mantis system is frequently used when the installation requires more performance in less space. Scott Moore has been with Eljen Corporation for two years. For more information about Eljen Corporation please visit them on the web at: [www.eljen.com](http://www.eljen.com)



**Joshua Frenetta** of **James Construction** joined us. Joshua is the owner of James Construction, established in 2008, is located in West Hartland, CT. Joshua was a student in COWRA's 2018 Installer Course. James Construction is a small,

minority business that services commercial and residential site work throughout Connecticut. They provide a variety of services, all of which are uniquely designed for each customer's needs. They work directly with their

customers, to provide the improvements and/or additions to the site. Their prices are competitive and their service is fast and reliable. Their services include: excavation, foundations, drainage, construction, septic installations and repairs, paving, utility installation, trenching and ponds, dams, wetland maintenance and repair. James Construction is dedicated to serving its customers' needs and being a site work company that the customer can rely on. For more information about Joshua's company, visit him on the web at: [www.jamesconstruction.net](http://www.jamesconstruction.net)

## CONNECTICUT STATE CODE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Letter from Amanda Clark to CAC members

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

As discussed at the DPH code advisory meeting, CT DPH would like to team up with our state associations and local health departments to promote SepticSmart Week 2018, Sept. 17-21. We will be targeting the general public in areas of the state utilizing SSDS. As part of our education campaign DPH will be creating a brochure that will be distributed at events and online stressing the importance of regulator SSDS maintenance and private well testing. We will also be engaging the media and conduct local outreach seminars. We are looking for participating association partners to donate services to be raffled at the events i.e. septic tank pumping, inspections, tipping or dumping fees (for the donated pumpouts) etc. Both the association and business/WPCA donating services will be recognized in the brochure and at the events. Raffling donated services in support of septic system management will bring more awareness to the event and may get the attention of local media. Tiziana Shea and I will be setting up public outreach forums around the state. These forums will be in the evening during SepticSmart week.

SepticSmart Week Core Messages:

- Protect It & Inspect It!
- Think at the Sink!
- Don't Overload the Commode!
- Pump Your Tank!
- Don't Strain Your Drain!
- Shield Your Field!
- Keep It Clean and Test Your Well!

The Department of Public Health (DPH), the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and local Association (partnering associations will be listed in the press release) partners are teaming up to present SepticSmart week 2018, Sept. 17-21, an annual event focused on educating homeowners and communities on the proper care and maintenance of their septic systems. In Connecticut more than 1 million people are served by an individual onsite system or small community septic system

to treat their wastewater. These systems treat and dispose of wastewater and include a wide range of individual and cluster treatment options to process household and commercial sewage. These systems go by such names as septic, subsurface sewage disposal, wastewater treatment, on-lot, individual sewage disposal, and private sewage system. Subsurface sewage disposal systems provide a cost-effective, long-term option for treating wastewater. When properly installed, operated, and maintained, these systems help protect public health, preserve valuable water resources, and maintain a community's economic vitality.

- **Think at the Sink!:** What goes down the drain has a big impact on your septic system. Fats, grease, and solids can clog a system's pipes and leaching system.
- **Don't Overload the Commode!:** A toilet is not a Trash can. Disposable diapers and wipes, feminine hygiene products, coffee grounds, cigarette butts, and cat litter can damage a septic system.
- **Don't Strain Your Drain!:** Use water efficiently and stagger use of water-based appliances. Too much water use at once can overload a system that hasn't been pumped recently.
- **Shield Your Field!:** Tree and shrub roots, cars, and livestock can damage your leaching system.
- **Keep It Clean!:** Contamination can occur when a septic system is not properly maintained. Be sure your private well water is safe by testing it regularly.
- **Protect It and Inspect It!:** Regular septic system maintenance can save homeowners thousands of dollars in repairs and protect public health.
- **Pump Your Tank!:** Ensure your septic tank is pumped at regularly intervals as recommended by a professional and/or local permitting authority.

SepticSmart week 2018 encourages homeowners, wastewater professionals, and state, tribal, and local officials to design and maintain effective systems to promote public health, water conservation, and economic wellbeing.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks you,  
Amanda J. Clark, RS  
Environmental Engineering Program  
860-509-7368

### COWRA'S 2018 INSTALLER SCHOOL



COWRA's 2018 Installer School was held in January and

February of this year. Our Installer course began on January 18, 2018 and ran for 7 consecutive Thursdays, as we were able to offer a 7<sup>th</sup> class due to the fact that we did not have to cancel for snow. There were 46 students enrolled in this year's class. We held our 2018 courses at a new location this year. The COWRA course was held at the First Congregational Church of Cromwell. This was a great location as it was easy access for our students from the highway, as our student come from all over CT. There was plenty of parking, which was very helpful to our students. The room was convenient to access and spacious for our students. We are hoping to obtain a contract for our 2019 class at the same facility.

### We Thank Douglas DiVesta, of DiVesta Civil Engineering Associates



Doug DiVesta has taught our installer course for many years. Doug is a Civil Engineer with years of experience and expertise in the area of septic design. Doug's years of experience bring to this course all aspects of septic design. He instills in our students the knowledge and skills they will need to enter their new careers. Doug spends many hours of his time helping our students understand the mathematics of septic design and the corresponding factors that define a viable system. Doug has seen just about every problem that can crop up in a septic installation. He is ready with the answer to each student's question.

### Robert Smith, Sanitarian with the Torrington District

Robert Smith knows the public health code inside and out. He spends hours with our students helping them to understand and apply the Technical Standards to every aspect of the 6 week course they are taking. Bob points out to our students the necessary provisions and gives in-depth examples to help them fully understand the Public Health Code. He explains each section of the Code, which will be a "Bible" to the students as they go forward in their new careers. A student who takes the installer course will be well versed in those provisions of the Public Health Code that regulate the installs and repairs they will make in their new profession.



During this course our students learn to identify the different soil layers. They learn to factor in the function of test holes, percolation rates, hydraulic factors and set-back distances. Our students emerge from the course with a complete understanding of all the different components of septic

installation. Students also learn the various types of products available and how to determine which products would be best for any given site.

COWRA is grateful for Doug DiVesta and Bob Smith; their dedication to our organization and the students through our program is a generous gift to all of us. The experience, professionalism and expertise that they bring to the course are invaluable gifts. Bob and Doug spend several weekends prior to the first night of class updating the Septic Installer Study Guide. Every time the Public Health Code is updated and the Technical Standard changed, these changes must be incorporated in the Study Guide. This is in addition to their time spent teaching the course.

Between the preparation of the annual study guide, teaching and preparation for each class, Doug DiVesta and Robert Smith spend a remarkable amount of their personal time. We are truly grateful for their generous service.

## COWRA'S 2018 PUMPER/CLEANER SCHOOL



**Bill Hall of Kaiser-Battistone** The Pumper/Cleaner School is held on the last night of our Installer course. The Pumper/Cleaner course is attended by all the installer students and those additional students who will be applying for their cleaning license only.

Bill Hall taught our Pumper/Cleaner course this year. Bill has taught this course years ago for COWRA.

Bill brings years of experience to the task of teaching the cleaner course. Bill is an expert in every aspect of the septic industry.

Bill has worn many hats as a member of COWRA as he has been a member for a very long time. He was the past president of COWRA and has served on the Board of Directors of Director for several years.



COWRA is very grateful to Bill Hall for his generous gift of time and knowledge and for providing our students with the skills they need to

secure their Pumper/Cleaner License.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO POLYLOK



We would like to give special thanks to Patrick Mulhall, owner of Polylok in Wallingford CT, who helped with our course in a very generous way. Patrick had one of his sales people, Bruce Houser, call to see if we needed and products to show our students. Our teachers, Doug and

Bob, had collected a few items over the years that they would bring into class to use as examples of products that our students might use in the septic field. This is very



helpful as students are able to see the actual product they will be working with in their new careers. Bruce had COWRA contact Patrick who had us ask our teachers what products would be helpful. Doug and Bob put together a wish list that we sent to Patrick.



However, when we went to Polylok to pick up the items, we were amazed at his generosity.

Patrick Mulhall packed a Subaru Forester with many wonderful products that covered a range of functions for our students to view. He gave us a variety of filters, seals, risers, distribution boxes, child safety inserts, etc.

COWRA is very grateful to Patrick Mulhall and Polylok for the substantial donation of products they donated for us to show to our students. We returned to our next class with a bounty of products. Thank you Patrick, for your generosity.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY SENATE BILL NO. 342

### **AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF CERTAIN ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT SEPTIC SYSTEMS.**

Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly *Effective October 1, 2018*)

Notwithstanding any provision of the Public Health Code or title 19a, 22a or 25 of the general statutes, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall authorize the use of alternative treatment septic systems if the use of such system: (1) Replaces an existing failing septic system, (2) does not allow for the further subdivision of the subject property, and (3) does not result in an increase in the number of bedrooms for any dwelling or improvement upon such subject property.

### **Explanation**

The bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to allow for the use of alternative treatment septic systems under certain conditions. Expanding the use of alternative treatment septic systems is anticipated to result in a minimal revenue gain associated with increased issuance of general permits for this purpose.

### **The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of general permits issued.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to allow the use of alternative treatment septic systems under the following three conditions:

The system replaces an existing failing septic system, it will not enable further subdivision of the property, and the number of bedrooms will not increase and there will be no improvements on the property.

An alternative treatment septic system consists of a sewage treatment system that uses a treatment method other than a subsurface sewage disposal system and involves a discharge to groundwater. DEEP is currently responsible for permitting all of these systems. The law requires the Department of Public Health to regulate and permit systems of up to 5,000 gallons, if it has appropriations to do so (CGS § 19a-35a). To date, no such regulations have been adopted. **EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2018**

## **THE FOLLOWING WAS SUBMITTED BY CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REGARDING BILL NO. 342**

**Connecticut Department of Public Health  
Testimony Presented Before the Environment  
Committee  
March 14, 2018**

### **Senate Bill 342 – An Act Concerning the Threshold for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection’s Review of Alternative Treatment Septic Systems**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information regarding Senate Bill 342, which increases the threshold for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) review of alternative treatment septic systems to a capacity of seven thousand five hundred gallons. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

Decentralized sewage systems serve approximately 40 percent of Connecticut’s population; whereas centralized sewer systems serve the remaining population. The vast majority of decentralized sewage systems in Connecticut are conventional subsurface sewage disposal systems (a.k.a., septic systems) that are regulated by DPH and our local health partners. Section 30 of Public Act No. 17-146 increased the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection’s (DEEP) jurisdictional threshold for these conventional systems from 5,000 gallons per day (GPD) to 7,500 GPD.

A very small percentage of decentralized sewage systems used in Connecticut are alternative systems that are permitted by DEEP. Historically, it was recognized that DPH and its local health partners were better positioned to regulate small alternative systems, which led to the passage of legislation in 2007 that is codified in CGS Sec. 19a-35a. The law provides for the transfer of jurisdiction from DEEP to DPH for alternative on-site sewage treatment systems with capacities up to 5,000 GPD, once DPH promulgates regulations that govern such systems. Unfortunately, no funding was ever appropriated to facilitate DPH's efforts to adopt regulations and operate an administrative program for these alternative systems.

DPH does not oppose raising the cited jurisdictional threshold in the statute from 5,000 GPD to 7,500 GPD to bring it in-line with the new jurisdictional threshold for conventional septic systems. However, DPH opposes legislation that requires the Department to develop regulations and an accompanying program for alternative sewage systems without the necessary resources to support such initiatives.

All decentralized sewage systems, both conventional and alternative, need to be properly managed to allow the state to meet its environmental and health protection goals. Proper management of alternative sewage systems is especially important because they require significantly more oversight than conventional septic systems. DPH supports the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) recommendations for states to re-evaluate their Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs to ensure decentralized sewage system needs are adequately determined and sufficiently funded as a means to implement comprehensive sewage system management programs.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.  
**Submitted by the DPH**

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

In **January 2019** the State of Connecticut will be introducing a revised Technical Standard. This will bring significant changes to the Public Health Code.

**September 15, 2018** COWRA will begin accepting applications for the 2019 Septic Installer and Cleaning courses.

**October 2018** General Assembly Senate Bill 342 will go into effect.

**September 17-21 2018** SepticSmart week



**Students from the COWRA Septic Courses**

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**2018 Installer School**

## **FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

**UPDATES!!** Registration Information for 2019 State Installers & Cleaners-Exams:  
You **MUST** contact the Department of Public Health to register for the Installers & Cleaners Exams.  
Please Note: attendance at the COWRA Installer School **DOES NOT** register you for the State exam.  
Please contact D.P.H. at 860-509-7368 for any information pertaining to your results and license.  
You may also contact them by going to [www.dph.state.ct.us/licensure/apps/subsew.pdf](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/licensure/apps/subsew.pdf)

### **2018 Examination Schedule Subsurface Sewage Installer/Cleaner**

<b>Exam Date</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>
September 7, 2018	August 24, 2018
December 7, 2018	November 23, 2018

**Connecticut Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association**  
For a copy of COWRA's 2018 Study Guide please call (860 267-1057)