



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

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## June 2013

### Letter from the President

Dear COWRA Members,

This is an important time for all of us in the wastewater industry as many changes are on the horizon. The Technical Standard that governs our businesses is in the process of revision for the 2014 Public Health Code. COWRA has members on the Code Advisory Committee which meets several times a year to discuss these new revisions and those issues that affect those working in our trade.

Please contact us if you have concerns that you would like us to bring to the to the State's attention at the Code Advisory meeting.

I hope you are all well and are having a prosperous year.

Best,  
Frank Talarico  
President

### NEW MEMBER PROFILES COWRA WELCOMES

**Jennifer L Ouellette** of Lambert & Barr LLC is the second member to join COWRA from this company. She joins James Lambert who is a long-time member of our organization. Jennifer is the project manager at Lambert & Barr LLC and she is a licensed Installer. Her company's services include septic installation, excavation, drainage, site work and demolitions. Other services offered by Jennifer's company are remodeling and renovations, new construction, additions, decks, masonry and patios. Lambert & Barr has been in business since 1973. They are located in New Milford CT. Jennifer has been with Lambert & Barr for 15 years. For more information about Jennifer's company visit her on the web at [www.lambertandbarr.com](http://www.lambertandbarr.com)

**Shaun Duffy** joined us this January. Shaun is Sanitarian with the Norwalk Public Health Department. Shaun was a student in COWRA's 2013 Installer course. He is responsible for inspecting new septic system and septic repairs in the Norwalk Health District. He has been with the Norwalk Health Department for just over a year. To contact the Norwalk Health Department visit [www.norwalkct.org](http://www.norwalkct.org)

**Jim King** of Eljen Corporation joined us in January. Jim works in sales at Eljen Corp. He joins long-time COWRA member Brian Parker, also of Eljen. Eljen Corporation is the manufacturer of the Geotextile Sand Filter, Prefabricated Drainage Systems and the well-known Mantis Wastewater Leaching System. Other products include Water-proofing Protection, Subsurface Water Control products, Non Aggregate Drainage Systems and Pipe sleeves, and Soil Gas Mats. Jim represented Eljen at last year's annual meeting. Jim has been with Eljen since 2010 for more information about Eljen Corporation visit, [www.eljen.com](http://www.eljen.com)

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COWRA Brochures are  
available to our  
Members at \$33.72 per  
100, including shipping.

## NEW MEMBERS PROFILE CONTINUED

**David Kyle Stearns** of D. Kyle Stearns Contracting, Inc joined us in March of this year. David is the sole proprietor of his company. He founded D. Kyle Stearns Contracting, which is located in Storrs CT, in 1996. David's services include septic installation, inspection, excavation, foundations and drainage. In addition to these services David provides full service landscaping. David designs all aspects of landscaping from gardening, retaining walls patios and walkway to ponds and hydro / drill seeding. For a complete list of D. Kyle Stearns Contracting services visit David on the web at: [www.dkylestearnscontracting.com](http://www.dkylestearnscontracting.com)

**Justin M Breault** joined us from ADB Construction & Septic Corp in April of this year. Justin is a licensed Installer with ADB Construction & Septic. ADB services include septic installation, pumping and cleaning, septic inspections, grease trap cleaning, camera and video technology, water jet, drain cleaning, drainage and waterproofing. ADB Construction and Septic Corp has over 20 years experience in the septic industry. They are located on Hebron CT. Justin has been with his company for 3 years. To learn more about ADB Construction and Septic Corp, please visit them on the web at [www.adbconstructionandseptic.com](http://www.adbconstructionandseptic.com)

**David Lytwyn** joined us in March of this year. David is the owner of Admiral Septic Services LLC. Admiral Septic Service is a family run business located in Willington CT and serves Hartford, Tolland and Windham Counties with 24/7 emergency service. Admiral Septic services include: septic installation and repair, tank pumping and cleaning, video camera inspections, Engineering and Surveying services and site evaluations. David has over 30 years experience in the septic industry. For more information about David's company visit him on the web at: [www.admiralseptic.com](http://www.admiralseptic.com)

## COWRA's CONCERN OVER THE DIRECTION OF ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT SYSTEMS

In October of 2012 Connecticut Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association wrote a letter to Commissioner Daniel C. Esty of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection expressing our concerns regarding the pending AT Systems construction and operator requirements and the potential impact on our industry. COWRA resent this letter certified on May 24, 2013 as Commissioner Esty had not responded to the October letter. The document referred to in the following letter can be found at:

<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/Decentralized-MOU-Partnership-Products.cfm> Visit this site for further information regarding this letter.

May 24, 2013

Frank Talarico  
COWRA  
P O Box 116  
East Hampton, CT 06424

Commissioner Daniel C. Esty  
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Commissioner Esty,  
I am writing this letter on behalf of the Board of Directors of

Connecticut Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (COWRA). This is the second letter we have written to you regarding this matter, the first was dated October 28, 2012 and we have yet to receive a response. COWRA represents individuals that design, install and provide operation and maintenance services for decentralized wastewater treatment systems in Connecticut. These systems serve approximately 40% of the population. The EPA has increasingly recognized that these onsite systems can be the most cost effective methodology of treating wastewater and recharging it back to the environment. The attached MOU documents illustrate the benefits of decentralized systems, relative to municipal treatment plants, and the broad support that exists outside of Connecticut. The EPA has encouraged states to reevaluate their Clean Water Fund programs to insure that decentralized systems are adequately funded and utilized when they are the most cost effective solution. Although many states are increasingly relying on decentralized systems, Connecticut is far behind. Your Department still favors expanding sewers over managing decentralized systems. It is well proven that proper management and upgrading of antiquated decentralized systems is far more cost effective than the expansion of sewers; even without taking into consideration the value of the recharge of water back to the aquifer.

Your Department has recently taken steps to control phosphorus and pathogen loads to the environment. A draft document entitled "A Statewide Total Daily Maximum Load for Bacteria Impaired Waters" was prepared by your Department. Unfortunately, this document did not consider that proper use and management of decentralized systems would be an effective strategy towards addressing this issue. Similarly, with respect to phosphorus, decentralized systems are very effective in treating phosphorus loads. Pending policies and regulations should take this into consideration.

COWRA was not invited to participate as a Stakeholder in any discussions regarding the above; we respectfully request that we be included in future discussions concerning the above referenced and any other matters concerning decentralized systems and associated water quality issues. We would like to set up a meeting with you and appropriate staff to determine how COWRA can work with the Department to better the environment and save tax payer dollars. We look forward to working with you and Department staff.

Sincerely,

Frank Talarico  
President  
COWRA

## COWRA's 2013 INSTALLER SCHOOL

COWRA's 2013 Installer School began this year on February 17, 2013 and ran for 6 consecutive Thursdays. This year's class was the smallest class we have had since we have been offering the installer course. We had 28 students in this year's class. Enrollment has gone down each year with the downfall of the housing market. For example, in 2008 at the beginning of our economy's troubles we had 72 students. In 2009 as the economy continued its decline we had 59 students and enrollment has continued to decline steadily right through this year. The biggest obstacle for our students is acquiring the four installs they need to apply for their license. As work has declined for our veteran installers it has left a void for those trying to enter the field and secure their own Installer License.

Although the economy and the housing market are beginning to recover it may be a while before work trickles down to all aspects of our industry. Many of our members reported that new septic installations were few and far between last year. Installers spent most of the past year repairing and cleaning older systems rather than installing new systems.

**Briggs Geddis is the Director of Environmental Health at the New Canaan Health Department.**



However, COWRA won the lottery several years ago when Doug DiVesta and Briggs Geddis joined our organization. For the past 20 years these two champions of our industry have shaped and guided the young men and women entering this field.

Their goal is to create a generation of competent professionals to carry on a standard of excellence within the industry. There are no corners cut in these lessons. Their classes are designed to expose students to all aspects of the industry they are preparing to enter and provide the understanding the student will need to construct systems that stand the test of time.

**Douglas DiVesta, P. E. of DiVesta Civil Engineering Associates**



Over the years Doug and Briggs have written and re-written the Septic Installer Study Guide that they use to guide our students through the entire process of septic installation. This Study Guide has become a reference manual among our members with many

members requesting copies each year.

Installer Students learn to identify the different soil layers, they study test holes, percolation rates, hydraulic factors and set-back distances. All components of septic installation, from the various



types of products to the mathematics that define a system are covered in detail. Students emerging from this course understand the science that establishes the ecology of a septic system and the methods needed to maintain that system. 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.

Between the preparation of the annual study guide and teaching and preparation of each class, Doug and Briggs spend an extraordinary amount of their personal time as a donation to our organization. We truly won the lottery when these two men offered their services. We are very grateful for their generosity.

COWRA offers this course as a co-operative effort with the State of Connecticut, who reviews the study guide each year. The objective of this course is to prepare our students for the state licensing exam, offered four times during the year by the State Health Department. Students taking this Installer course do much better on the exam than those who do not. This is thanks to the commitment and skill of our dedicated teachers.

COWRA thanks Doug DiVesta and Briggs Geddis for the generous gift of their time, skills and knowledge in teaching this course for us each year. Their expertise in this field, their integrity and dedication to high standards in the industry is the true gift they bring to each and every student they teach and to us as an organization. Thank you, Doug and Briggs.

**COWRA's 2013 PUMPER/CLEANER SCHOOL**

The Pumper/Cleaner School is held on the last night of our Installer course. Each year this course is attended by all the installer students and those students who sign up for the one-night Pumper/Cleaner class.



**Jon Skipper and Drew Gilbert** are two men without whom COWRA would be lost. If you have been privileged to have taken their class you have learned a lot

and laughed a lot. These are two very funny men. As I write this I laugh out loud over things that they've said in that class. Even if you have your Cleaners License, you may want to take this class just for the fun of it. But laughter aside, you will learn and be well prepared for the Pumper/Cleaner exam.

This year's Pumper/Cleaners course had 37 Students. For the past several years Jon Skipper and Drew Gilbert have taught this course. Jon and Drew work for Skip's Septic Tank Service and both are licensed Septic Installers and Pumper/Cleaners.

Drew and Jon bring years of experience, skill and knowledge to their task and developed a program of Septic Cleaning Procedure for this course that prepares our students for the exam. Students taking this course learn the proper procedure for pumping and cleaning, including safety practices, septic inspection, inspection of filters and baffles and preparing Permit to Discharge forms.

COWRA is very grateful to Jon Skipper and Drew Gilbert for their generous gift of time and knowledge and for providing our students with the skills they need to secure their Pumper/Cleaner License.

**DATE TO REMEMBER**

Soil Training Workshop October 23 & 24, 2013  
See insert.

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**2013 Installer Students**

## **FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

**UPDATES!!** Registration Information for 2013 State Installers & Cleaners-Exams:  
You **MUST** contact the Department of Public Health to register for the Installers & Cleaners Exams.  
Attendance at the COWRA Installer School **DOES NOT** register you for the State exam.  
Please contact D.P.H. at 860-509-7296 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)

### **2013 Examination Schedule Subsurface Sewage Installer/Cleaner**

<b>Exam Date</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>
June 24, 2013	June 7, 2013
September 16, 2013	August 30, 2013
December 9, 2013	November 22, 2013

**Connecticut Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association**  
For a copy of COWRA's 2013 Study Guide please call (860 267-1057)