



## New England Onsite Wastewater Training Center

To: Rhode Island Communities

From: George Loomis, Director

Date: March 16, 2007

Subject: **Update on the Rhode Island Web-based Information System (RIWIS) for septic system tracking and management**

The Rhode Island Web-based Information System (RIWIS) for local management of onsite wastewater treatment systems, is now available to Rhode Island municipalities, state agencies and service providers. There is no charge other than a \$100 annual membership fee.

### **State Support for RIWIS**

The University of Rhode Island is working with the RI Department of Environmental Management to support RIWIS through the following:

- Coordinating with RI DEM to make septic system permit data available to participating communities.
- Providing recommended inspection reports, data fields, and standardized terminology to make RIWIS as consistent statewide and user friendly as possible while also meeting individual needs of each municipality.
- Providing modules to simplify wastewater management using standardized notices to system owners. Examples include inspection, pumpout and repair notices; reminders and enforcement actions; and supporting factsheets.
- Offering regular training in use of the RIWIS database and in setting up a wastewater management program using RIWIS functions. The first training programs are scheduled for May 18 and July 26, 2007, as described below.

### **Two New Workshops for Communities Interested in Getting Started**

#### ***May 18, 2006 – Starting a Local Wastewater Management Program Using RIWIS***

9 am -12:30 pm Coastal Institute Building, Kingston RI

Interested but not sure how to get started? URI Cooperative Extension will host a work session for communities who are interested in learning more about managing onsite systems using RIWIS.

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This workshop will focus on steps in starting a basic management program to include:

- Setting up the database
- Tracking renewal of operation and maintenance agreements for alternative and large flow systems.
- Establishing a septic system information and education program using readily available materials.
- Phasing in septic system inspections in problem areas and/or sensitive resources.
- Staff options for managing the database – consultant and/or town staff.
- Discussion of local concerns and priorities.

For more information please see the enclosed flyer or contact Lorraine Joubert, URI Cooperative Extension NEMO program at [ljoubert@uri.edu](mailto:ljoubert@uri.edu) or 401-874-2138.

***July 26, 2007 – Tracking onsite system inspections, operation and maintenance using the RIWIS statewide database.***

8 am -5 pm Coastal Institute Building, Kingston RI

This basic training in use of the RIWIS database is offered in cooperation with Scott Carmody of Carmody™. It is designed for municipal staff, private sector wastewater managers, and maintenance providers who are new system users or would like to expand their ability to use the system to track system inspection results, maintenance activities, and communicate with system owners. Using example applications by RI communities, this will address database features, updating and managing records, and generating notices, and steps in phasing in a management program. Others that will find it valuable include: maintenance providers interested in tracking client service schedules; and consultants seeking to expand services to municipalities by serving as local database /wastewater managers. For more information, and to register, go to <http://www.uri.edu/ce/wq/OWT/Courses/index.htm>. Note: RI municipalities enrolled in RIWIS will be eligible for a reduced rate of \$75 / \$100 (late). For more information contact Lorraine Joubert, URI Cooperative Extension NEMO program at [ljoubert@uri.edu](mailto:ljoubert@uri.edu) or 401-874-2138.

**Need for Local Maintenance**

Managing onsite wastewater treatment systems is a municipal responsibility. Extensive state support has been provided through nonpoint source grants for development of wastewater management plans and implementation projects, and low interest loans through the Community Septic System Loan Program. Ensuring that maintenance contracts for alternative systems are renewed regularly is particularly critical given increasing use of these systems on high water table sites. Because the Carmody™ system is accessed on-line, the program is highly efficient and easily accessed by all parties. Municipalities have the option of hiring a private consultant to monitor compliance with maintenance requirements rather than relying on staff.

## Why Sign Up Now?

This offer is being made available by Carmody™ with funding from industry sponsors. Rhode Island is the first state where this prototype funding approach is being tested. We feel this is an unprecedented opportunity for communities to avail themselves of a powerful database that would otherwise cost each municipality thousands of dollars annually. At this point, local officials should contact Carmody™ to join the RIWIS program for an annual membership fee of \$100. Or contact URI Cooperative Extension for more information.

## For More Information

**To learn more and join  
RIWIS**



Carmody™  
P.O. Box 434, De Forest, WI 53532  
Tel: 608-846-0234  
Email: [contact\\_us@carmodydata.com](mailto:contact_us@carmodydata.com)  
Visit us at: <http://www.carmody.biz>

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**About URI's involvement  
and general program  
information**

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Visit RIWIS at: <http://www.RIWIS.org>

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**About workshops and  
using RIWIS for  
community wastewater  
management**

Lorraine Joubert, URI Cooperative Extension  
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