



Town of Charlestown

Wastewater Management Commission

4540 South County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813

5-Nov-2000

On Contracts for Repairs to Septic Systems

In many cases, this commission no longer requires three bids for the repair or replacement of components of septic systems. However, the practice of obtaining competitive bids for many replacement or repairs can be recommended for several reasons. Frequently, the objective evaluation of the problem with a system will suggest alternative methods or components for effecting the repair. In addition, multiple bids will confirm the specifications of the repairs and components of the entire wastewater system. As in medicine, a second opinion may often shed new light on a problem that was not obvious at first.

Therefore, we suggest that you **first**, get a list of installers of septic systems from us and then **second**, select at least two potential contractors from the list. Then interview each contractor with a written list of questions that pertain to the repair problem and then **third**, get a diagram of the repair plan and list of installed components proposed by each contractor. Finally **fourth**, select the parameters and plan that satisfies your needs. Ask each contractor to bid on your final selected plan.

Select the contractor as above before starting the permit process with the RI, Department of Environmental Management (DEM). If RIDEM requires the digging of a test hole, have your chosen contractor dig the hole, check on the test performance and proceed with your proposed system when approved.

We are ready to assist you in the evaluation of the repairs required for your system, though we cannot suggest specific contractors. Here, on the other side, we include questions and factors to ask bidding contractors or installers for septic systems.

Charlestown WMC by J. D. Johnson

DRAFT-3

Block Island and Green Hill Pond Watershed, National Community Decentralized Wastewater Treatment
Demonstration Project



Questions to Ask Contractors/Installers

1. Is the contractor licensed and insured to work in Rhode Island?
2. What are the terms of payment for work performed?
3. How are the charges for work performed described or separated? i.e.
 - A) Permitting fees
 - B) Engineering cost
 - C) Site preparation and moving excavating equipment
 - D) Materials for the contract
 - E) Removal and disposal of contaminated soil
4. What type of system components will be installed for the repair and/or upgrade?
 - A) Septic tank - certified watertight. See fact sheet*.
 - B) Leach field - galleys, trenches or sand filter.
 - C) Type of distribution box - standard or tipping. See fact sheet*.
 - D) Type and class of conduit/pipes - PVC or equivalent
 - E) Will risers be installed to access tank from grade level?
PVC risers with fiberglass lids recommended. See fact sheet*.
5. Clean-up after installation:
 - A) Will all surplus material be removed?
 - B) Will there be grading and landscaping to provide storm drainage from system site?
 - C) Will there be 3 – 4 inches of topsoil overlay for lawn replacement or other material if not for a lawn?
 - D) Will contractor restore property for access to system?
 - E) Price of additional topsoil if required? Per yard or truckload.
 - F) Price of extra fill material or gravel if required? Per yard or truckload.

For more information...

*...additional fact sheets:

- How to Order and Buy a Septic Tank
- How to Order and Buy a Distribution Box
- Access Risers and Effluent Filters

...contact:

- The Town of Charlestown Wastewater Management Commission at 364-5030
- URI Cooperative Extension for technical questions at 874-5950