

Associated Activities

In addition to proper wastewater treatment, these activities help to protect ground and surface waters.

- Hazardous Waste collection events
- Water conservation devices
- Underground fuel tank removal rebates
- Land in conservation
- Zoning ordinances

Public Education

- Annual Report of Water Quality
- Annual Aquifer Index
 - Pathogens
 - Nutrients
 - Saltwater intrusion

Monitoring Programs

- Ground water
- Salt Ponds
- Freshwater ponds
- Vernal ponds

Island Partners in This Effort

- Committee for the Great Salt Pond
- Town of New Shoreham
- Office of Wastewater Management
- Conservation Commission
- Harbors Department
- Island Steering Committee-EPA Project
- The Nature Conservancy
- Block Islanders and our visitors

Other Partners in This Effort

- US EPA
- University of Rhode Island
- Town of Charlestown, RI
- Town of South Kingstown, RI

A Guide to

PROPERTY OWNER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

and Information about
Inspecting and Upgrading of

On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems



PRESERVE

BLOCK ISLAND'S

Clean Ground and Surface Water

Introduction

The proper treatment of wastewater from an on-site wastewater treatment system, rather than from a public sewer system, is essential to maintaining the existing high quality of Block Island's ground and surface water. Adequate treatment will help provide maximum protection for the island's limited ground water supply and vulnerable natural habitats.

On-site wastewater treatment systems, often known as septic systems, provide sanitary sewage disposal by means other than discharge into a public sewer system. The State of Rhode Island refers to these as Individual Sewage Disposal Systems (ISDS).

Initiatives currently in effect on Block Island include implementation of First Maintenance Inspections of all ISDS, the addition of Septic Tank Improvements on all ISDS, and the replacement of cesspools including steel tanks. These items are mandated by the Town's Wastewater Management Ordinance and by Section 506 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Property (land) owners are responsible for implementing these mandates before the established deadlines.

To assist property owners in executing this responsibility, several financial aid programs, involving rebates and loans, have been established by the US EPA and the State of Rhode Island, and are outlined in this brochure. Full details and applications for financial assistance are available from the Town's Office of Wastewater Management.

No Cost First Maintenance Inspections

In the past, property owners have been responsible for locating, uncovering and recovering their ISDS for first maintenance inspections, with the Town providing the actual inspections at no cost to the property owner.

After February 2004, the Town began to provide the locating, uncovering, and recovering, in addition to the inspection, at no cost to the property owner. These additional no-cost services are available for inspections completed by 12/31/04.

Rebates for Septic Tank Improvements

Section 506 of the Town Zoning Ordinance requires that all ISDS have Septic Tank Improvements (access risers and out-put filters) installed by 12/31/05. Rebates are available for the costs involving modification of existing septic tanks. Two types of rebates are available:

1. **Basic Rebate** of actual costs up to \$350 for the first 800 ISDS so modified after 1/1/98. Installation must be completed by 12/31/05.
2. **Supplemental Rebate** of actual costs up to \$1,000, in addition to the basic rebate, is available to property owners who are 65 years old or older and on fixed income, or property owners who live on Block Island at least six months a year. Applicants must have already received a basic rebate and the tank modified after 1/1/98. Installation must be complete by 3-31-05.

The total amount available for supplemental rebates is \$104,500 and rebates are available only until this amount is exhausted. This is on a first-come-first-served basis, determined by the date of receipt of the completed application.

Low Interest Loans for ISDS Repairs

Loans for repair of existing ISDS are available for up to \$25,000 at a fixed rate of 4% for 10 years. These loans are available from the RI Community Septic System Loan Program.

*US EPA**National Community Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Demonstration Project*

The EPA plan describes the Project as being:

"designed to build local capacity for managing community wastewater management programs by strengthening local expertise and creating management structures for town management of on-site systems beyond the life of this Demonstration Project."

The plan further states that:

"On Block Island, where the Town of New Shoreham has adopted a wastewater management ordinance and treatment standards to protect critical resources, the focus will be:

1. *To put in place personnel and technical guidance to accelerate implementation of these ordinances.*
2. *To provide incentives necessary to retrofit, repair and upgrade existing on-site wastewater systems*
3. *To develop and implement an on-site wastewater public information program."*

For further information and applications contact:

Office of Wastewater Management
PO Box 220
Block Island RI 02807
401-466-8924