To all homeowners with a home sewage treatment system,

A statewide sewage code that superseded local sewage regulations went into effect on January 1, 2015. All health districts are now required to develop sewage Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Programs to assess the operating conditions of all private sewage systems within their jurisdictions. The New Philadelphia City Health District (NPCHD) is in the process of implementing an O&M program for The City of New Philadelphia.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has begun conducting surveys of local health districts to determine the extent of their compliance with the new code’s requirements. All existing home sewage treatment systems (HSTS) are required to have renewable operation permits. Operation permits are in addition to the original installation permits. The sewage code gives a maximum limit for the length of time that an operation permit is valid, but health districts can vary renewal times based on the type of sewage system. Sewage systems that are not creating public health nuisances will not be required to be improved, except for having risers on septic tanks, sampling ports and distribution boxes since these items aid in maintenance and monitoring.

An Ohio EPA sewage grant program is available to help pay for the costs of correcting failed sewage systems, including connecting to sanitary sewer.

A three-tiered division of renewable operation permits has been proposed according to the risk factors of system age, complexity, and risks to public health. During the assessment phase of the O&M Program, a site inspection and septic tank pumping will not be necessary until after the operation permit has been issued.

Annual operation permits will be required for each system that utilizes mechanical components or are unknown. Operation permits with five (5) year limits will be required for systems that utilize off-lot discharging of wastewater. This keeps timeframes in line with the five (5) year time limit mandated in the required National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits already enforced by the Ohio EPA for all wastewater discharged to the waters of the state. All other systems that treat wastewater on lot will have the maximum allowable ten (10) year renewal period. Operation permits of sewage systems installed after the adoption of the new state sewage code (January 1, 2015) will be honored until their expiration dates.

A public hearing regarding the O&M program will be held December 7th at 10:00am in the City of New Philadelphia -Municipal Building council chambers, located on the basement level. 150 East High Ave New Philadelphia.

Thank you,

Zachary Phillips RS/REHS

Director of Environmental Health