

MEMORANDUM

To: Robert Kosin, Village of Barrington Hills
Board of Health Members

From: Daniel J. Strahan, P.E., CFM
Gewalt Hamilton Associates

Date: February 20, 2013

Re: 2013 IEHA Onsite Wastewater Conference Update

850 Forest Edge Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
TEL 847.478.9700 ■ FAX 847.478.9701

820 Lakeside Drive, Suite 5, Gurnee, IL 60031
TEL 847.855.1100 ■ FAX 847.855.1115

www.gha-engineers.com

On February 12-13, 2013 I attended the Northern Illinois Onsite Wastewater Conference & Trade Show in Crystal Lake, sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Health Association. The conference included a number of speakers on a variety of topics:

- “Past 100 Years and Future of Onsite Resource Water,” Colin Bishop, Anua
- “A Look at Alternative Systems,” Curtis Cluckey, Infiltrator Systems, Inc.
- “IDPH- Private Sewage Disposal Code Changes,” Chad Moorman, IDPH
- “High Strength Waste- Challenges & Solutions,” Charles Ray, Anua
- “West Nile Virus and Construction Sites,” Barbara O’Meara, IDPH
- “USEPA NPDES Permits,” Mark Ackerman, USEPA

I have attended this conference for a number of years and it has always proven to be useful to understand trends in the industry as well as pending changes to the regulations. A few of the main takeaways from the conference this year are as follows:

- The industry is generally moving toward shallower systems for several reasons. While often required to maintain adequate vertical separation from the limiting layer, the uppermost 6-18” of soil tend to also have the best aerobic conditions and microbial activity to maximize treatment of the wastewater. Shallower systems also tend to maximize nutrient uptake in plants.
- Pressure dosing of septic systems is preferred to traditional gravity systems. While requiring additional mechanical components, pressure dosing allows for the full length of each trench to be more fully utilized and helps moderate peak flows.
- Public health requirements within restaurants tend to negate/impair the performance of the septic systems they connect to. Sanitizers aimed at eliminating bacteria in the kitchen also eliminate the bacteria that are essential to the performance of a septic system.
- 40-50% of storm sewer catch basins in an urbanized area breed mosquitoes; isolated pockets of water like these are ideal for the Culex species which is the carrier of West Nile Virus. Floodwater mosquitoes generally don’t carry diseases.
- The IDPH is reviewing comments received during the First Notice Period for the proposed septic code amendments. They anticipate holding a public hearing in Springfield towards the end of March.