



## PROBLEMS AND HAZARDS WITH CONVENTIONAL SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Conventional septic systems can pose a variety of environmental hazards if not properly installed and maintained. Septic waste contains high concentrations of nitrogen which can leak into the groundwater table if improperly discharged. High nitrogen levels entering a body of water can cause algal blooms and deterioration of water quality.

Septic tanks can be upgraded with nitrogen-reducing features to eliminate the risk of contaminating local springs and water bodies. In some areas, connection to the County's sewer system can be made available. The County treats wastewater to Advanced Wastewater Treatment standards and produces Public Access Reuse quality effluent—among the highest levels of treatment available.

Upgrading conventional septic systems to nitrogen-reducing systems or connecting to the County's treatment system can help protect the environment and Wakulla Springs.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding septic tank permitting:

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**Bureau of Environmental Health**  
**Water and Onsite Programs**  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-08  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1710  
Phone: 850-245-4250

For questions regarding the BMAP and wastewater permitting:

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT**  
**OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**  
160 W. Government Street, Suite 308  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
Phone: 850-595-8300



## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE For Septic System Owners

## OPTIONS FOR UPGRADES

**1 NITROGEN-REDUCING SEPTIC SYSTEM**  
Under normal conditions, conventional septic tanks provide minimal treatment to reduce nitrogen, and when these systems are not properly installed or maintained, high discharges of nitrogen to the groundwater can occur. Nitrogen-reducing systems utilize a variety of different technologies designed to decrease the amount of nitrogen from the wastewater before it is discharged. Upgraded systems with nitrogen-reducing features help to reduce the risk of contaminating local water bodies.

**2 CONNECTION TO CONVENTIONAL SEWER SYSTEM**  
Sewer systems remove wastewater from the homeowner's property and transport it to a centralized facility where it is treated to remove pollutants such as nitrogen. These systems provide a higher level of treatment to reduce nitrogen and other harmful pollutants than typical septic systems. The Wakulla County Otter Creek Water Reclamation Facility treats to Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) standards which compared to a conventional septic system improves nitrogen removal by 95%. When connected to a central collection system, the homeowner is responsible for a monthly bill for sewer treatment and maintenance of the plumbing on their private property.



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### UPGRADE TO PERFORMANCE BASED SEPTIC TANK

Where connection to sewer is not feasible, homeowners in targeted areas within the County are encouraged to voluntarily remediate existing conventional septic systems to include nitrogen-reducing enhancements. Eligible homeowners can receive up to \$7,000.00 per existing home as an incentive payment to install enhanced nitrogen-reducing features to existing septic systems.

For additional information related to this grant, contact Jay Moseley, GSG at 850-681-3717.

### CONNECT TO EXISTING SEWER

Where connection to sewer is feasible—homeowners in targeted areas within the County are encouraged to voluntarily connect to central sewer. Eligible homeowners can receive up to \$7,000.00 per existing home as an incentive payment to switch from septic systems to sewer.

For additional information related to this grant, contact Jay Moseley, GSG at 850-681-3717.

### NEIGHBORHOOD SEPTIC-TO-SEWER

The County, Northwest Florida Water Management District, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection have partnered together to identify areas where the County's sewer system can be expanded to provide service to areas currently utilizing septic systems. Each grant varies but costs to homeowners for the connection are typically minimal or free. After connection, the homeowner is responsible for a monthly sewer bill which varies based on water usage.

For current billing rates and additional info related to this grant, please contact the County's Public Works Office at 850-745-6509.

## AM I ELIGIBLE?

### BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Utilize a septic tank
- Resident of Wakulla County
- Complete survey
- Homeowner

### SCOPE OF FDEP GRANT

#### Performance Based Septic System

The incentive program is intended to offset a portion of homeowner cost by providing certified septic system installers and licensed plumbers with up to \$7,000.00 after the installation of enhanced nitrogen-reducing features to existing septic systems located in targeted areas within the County.

#### Connection to Conventional Sewer System

The incentive program is intended to offset a portion of homeowner cost by providing homeowners with up to \$7,000.00 after the connection of an existing home to central sewer, including the installation of a grinder pump capable of achieving head pressure of 45 pounds per square inch or more.

