



Benton Co. Septic System Grant 2009-2013



Assisting families and protecting public health

A partnership between County and State Governments

Why We Needed Help

There are more septic system permits issued in Benton Co than anywhere else in the state.

When they malfunction, public sewer is not usually available.

Many families cannot afford the expense....

Typical septic system cost:

\$3000 to \$5000

It's Not Cheap....



Average price for Septic System:

The Design Work:	\$600
Health Department Fees:	\$30 to \$150
Installation:	\$2,500 to \$5,000

This is for a Basic System. Advanced systems can cost up to \$25,000.

HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Funds)

www.hud.gov

“The CDBG program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs....”

Project size: \$50,000 to \$200,000

HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Funds)

- In Arkansas, mostly used for large public sewer and water projects.
- Grant Administrator suggested invoking the “Innovative Use Clause”.
- The state approved our request to apply.
- Had to modify existing forms for septic system use.
- This has never been done in Arkansas.
- Other states are watching this project closely!

Next Step: Finding Applicants

- Unresolved complaint files
- Referrals from various sources



Hint: That's not mud!

Who qualified for assistance:

- Must live in unincorporated area or small city that does not already receive CDBG funding.
- Qualify as low-to-moderate income household.
(Ex. A family of 4 must make less than \$42,500)
- Owner of the property OR the renter
- Septic System in need of repair (or non-existent)



The Application Process

- **Step 1: Contact the potential applicants.**
[only 16 of the 31 contacted replied by the deadline]
- **Step 2: The Paperwork !**
 - ◆ Proof of Income
 - ◆ Proof of property ownership
 - ◆ If renting, need permission from landlord & a rent control agreement
 - ◆ Permission to enter property
 - ◆ Owner agrees not to sell property for 3 years (unless gets permission)
 - ◆ Scheduled a day for all applicants to come to health unit for help in filling out the paperwork.
 - ◆ If the applicants couldn't come to us, the EHS staff went to them

The Application Process

- **Step 3: Health Department Role:**
 - ◆ Budget
 - ◆ Pictures of property
 - ◆ Description of repairs needed for each site
 - ◆ Synopsis (impact on public health, diagrams, definitions,) how septic systems work, etc.)



The Application Process

- **Step 3: Health Department Role (cont.)**
 - ◆ Technical advisor
 - ◆ Point of contact for the applicants, the county, the grant administrators, designers & installers.
 - ◆ Defined designer/installer responsibilities.
 - ◆ Determined who needed installer, well driller, master plumber, pumper licensed services.

The Application Process

- **Step 4: Benton County Grants Coordinator**
 - ◆ Held Public Hearing
 - ◆ Assisted applicants with paperwork
 - ◆ Reviewed application packets
 - ◆ Wrote narrative & completed grant application
 - ◆ Ensured that the deadline was met!

Great News!

In June 2009, Benton County was awarded the grant:

\$ 128,700.00

Who We Are Helping

A grandmother raising her 3 year old granddaughter.



A disabled mother with no transportation.

Sewage exits directly from back of house.

Who We Are Helping

A mom not working
due to illness



A chicken farmer with
an income of less
than \$20,000 and a
family of eight.

Who We Are Helping

Lost their jobs due to recession....



Who We Are Helping

2 elderly sisters....



Sharing a failing septic system.

Who We Are Helping



A homeschooled family of 8

Disabled elderly couple



Who We Are Helping



Two more Elderly Sisters.
There is no plumbing in either home.

But they have an overflowing outhouse and washing machine



Who We Are Helping

Mentally
Disabled Adult
that lives
alone



Now What?

- Accepted bids for the design work.
- Designed and approved septic permits for each property.
- Determined which properties would require a Master Plumber and licensed Septic Tank Cleaner.
- Bid out the installation work.
- Installed systems for 14 homes.



The Money

- The Design Work: \$400
- Health Department Fees: \$30
- Installation: \$2200 to \$9000
- Administration Fees



\$58,889 Spent

- We had money left over!
- We were allowed to apply the money to more families!



Round 2!

- Completed the application process for 25 homes.
- Designed the systems.
- Ready to bid out the installation work.



What We've Learned

- People won't respond to just letters.
- Get multiple phone numbers.
- Be there to help fill out application.
- Patience is crucial!
- Start early!
- Have Pre-Bid Meetings with Contractors
- It is a “hands-on” process!

Future goals:

- Apply for and receive maximum award amount.
- Continue to work with Benton County to pursue additional funding.
- Explore the available low-interest loan programs.
- Have funding dedicated to septic system repairs.
- State Health Dept. to create a section dedicated to funding for septic system repairs.
- Work with local non-profits.

Financial Aid for your Area:

- **USDA Rural Development**

Home Repair Loans

- 1% Interest paid back over 20 years
- Qualify based on income.
- Limited to \$20,000.

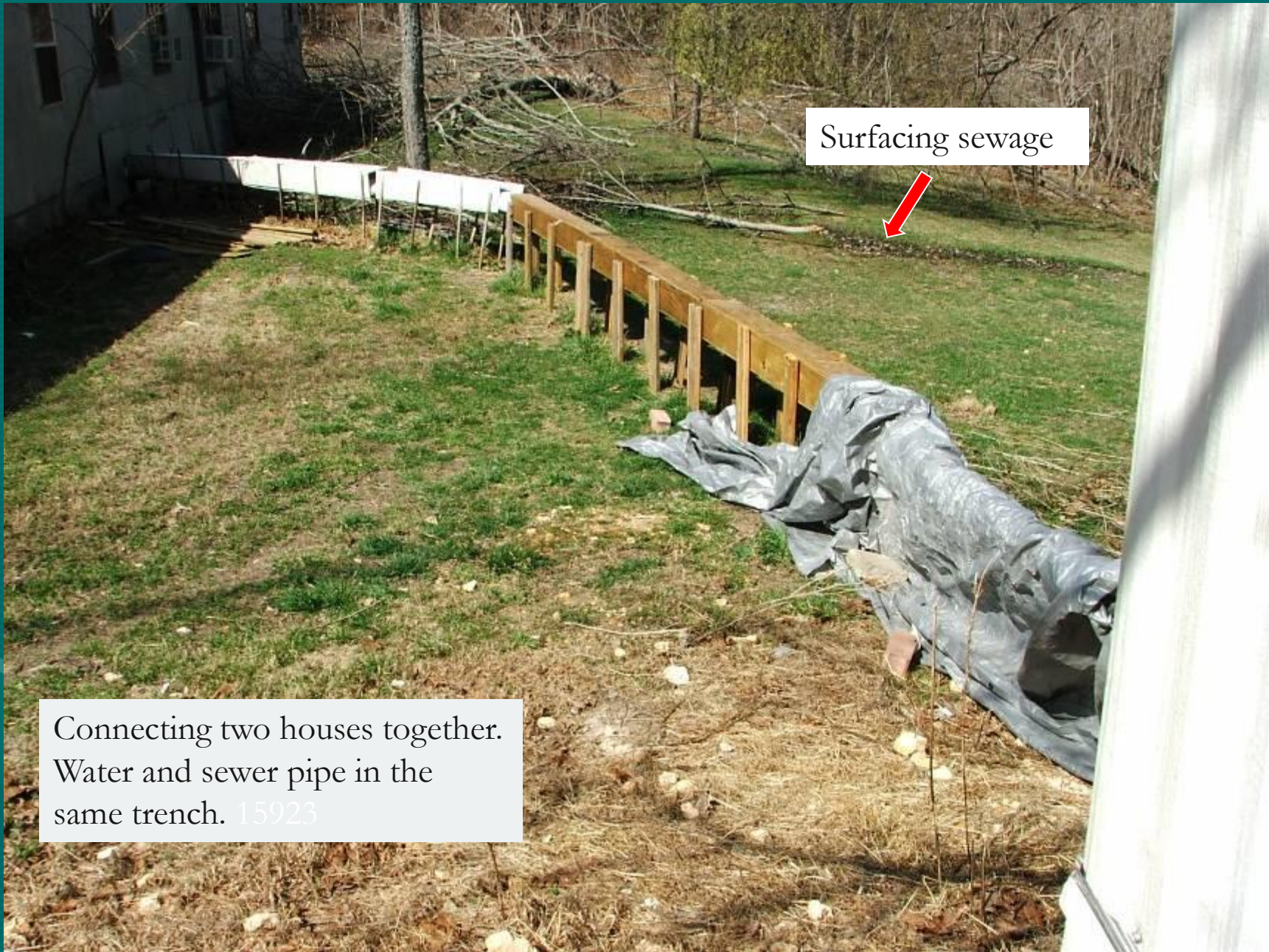
Home Repair Grants

- For Seniors 62 and older
- Limited to \$7,500
- Can be combined with the low interest loan

www.rurdev.usda.gov

Other Funding Sources

- Watershed Protection Organizations
- Rebuilding Together Non-Profit:
www.rebuildingtogether.org
- Cities
- EPA 319 grant
- Other local non-profits



Surfacing sewage

Connecting two houses together.
Water and sewer pipe in the
same trench. 15923

A doghouse covering the top of a tank



Owner was trying to keep people and pets safe using what was available.



Some strategically placed leaves....



This is a “Turken”



A Chicken crossed with a Turkey....

Found this after they purchased the property....



Beaver Lake. Drinking water source of 420,000 people....



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Questions?

