



septicsmart™

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Homeowner Outreach & Education

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Background

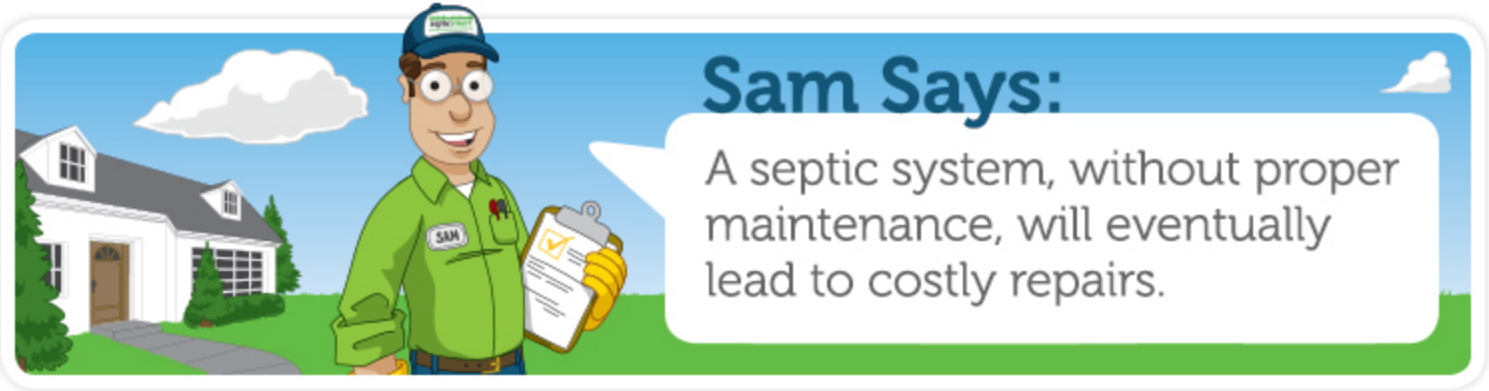
- ▶ SepticSmart, is a online national outreach program designed to promote proper septic system care and maintenance by homeowners launched by EPA on Nov. 15, 2012.
- working through the Decentralized MOU Partnership, will provide local stakeholders with homeowner-targeted materials and outreach strategies that will support and compliment their own education efforts
- Materials are web-based and available for downloading and printing (instructions included)
 - Doorhanger, postcards, homeowners' guide (long & short) all in English and Spanish; Case studies

- Water Home
- Drinking Water
- Education & Training
- Grants & Funding
- Laws & Regulations
- Our Waters
- Pollution Prevention & Control
- Resources & Performance
- Science & Technology
- Water Infrastructure
 - Drinking Water
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Septic Systems
 - Sustainable Infrastructure
 - Water Security
 - Wastewater
 - WaterSense
- What You Can Do

Water: Septic (Onsite / Decentralized) Systems [Contact Us](#) [Share](#)

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SepticSmart Home



- Home
- The Basics
- Why Maintain?
- Proper Care
- Resources

Welcome to SepticSmart!

Did you know that one-quarter of all U.S. homes have septic systems? Yours may be one of them. If you're not properly maintaining your septic system, you're not only hurting the environment, you're putting your family's health at risk—and may be flushing thousands of dollars down the drain!

EPA's SepticSmart initiative is a nation-wide public education effort that aims to inform homeowners living on properties serviced by septic systems on the importance of properly maintaining their septic system and provide valuable resources to help homeowners make important decisions regarding their wastewater management needs. The initiative also provides resources for [outreach organizations and government leaders](#) who seek promote this message locally.

- ### SepticSmart Quick Links
- System Failure Causes
 - Frequent Questions
 - Glossary
 - Contacts
-
- EPA Decentralized Wastewater Home

Looking to Launch a Local Outreach Campaign?

- Check out the [SepticSmart Outreach Toolkit!](#)

Government officials,

SepticSmart Door Hanger

- [English Version \(PDF\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)
- [Recommended Print Specs \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 846K)
- [English Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1.1MB)



Print directions: Many cost-effective printing solutions are available online for printing these door hanger files.

The above files have been designed to accommodate the unique die-cuts for the doorknob punch out offered by these online solutions.

"Did You Know? Leaks" Postcard

- [Recommended Print Specs \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 2.8MB)
- [English Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)



Print directions: Provide these files to a local print shop or a professional printer near you. Create mailing labels, add postage, and you are ready to mail to local homeowners.

"Summer Fun" Postcard

- [Recommended Print Specs \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 2.8MB)
- [English Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 1MB)



homeowners.

Long Homeowners Guide

- [English Version \(PDF\)](#) (9 pp, 2.9MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\)](#) (9 pp, 2.9MB)
- [Recommended Print Specs \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 588K)
- [English Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (9 pp, 2.9MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (9 pp, 2.9MB)

Print directions: Provide these files to a local print shop or a professional printer near you. This will print as single, double-sided sheets that can be stapled.



Homeowners Rack Brochure

- [English Version \(PDF\)](#) (2 pp, 3MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\)](#) (2 pp, 3MB)
- [Recommended Print Specs \(PDF\)](#) (1 pg, 2.6MB)
- [English Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 3MB)
- [Spanish Version \(PDF\) \(Print-Ready Version\)](#) (2 pp, 3MB)



Print directions: Provide these files to a local print shop or a professional printer near you. This brochure is sized to roll-fold and fit easily into standard rack brochure lucite holders. Note: the standard PDF versions can be printed on the 11" x 17" (tabloid) paper with the "Short Edge Binding" setting of all in-office printers.

Contact SepticSmart Staff:

Phone: (202) 564-1162

E-mail: decentralized@epa.gov

Case Studies – successful, long standing education and awareness efforts

- [King County Wastewater Education Program Case Study](#)
 - [University of Minnesota Onsite Sewage Treatment Program Case Study](#)
 - [Snohomish County Septic System Outreach Pilot Program Case Study](#)
 - [Sewage and Wastewater Elimination Education Program \(SWEEP\) Case Study](#)
 - [Washington State University Extension Small Acreage Program Case Study](#)
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Recent Tools Developed for Communities

By EPA Office of Wastewater Management



Management Model Case Studies

- ▶ Examples of how local programs considered a wide variety of treatment technologies, from simple septic systems to advanced treatment clustered units, reflecting the specific management needs of the community.

<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/demos.cfm>

US EPA water.epa.gov/infrastructure x

water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/upload/Decentralized-Case-Study_Jamestown-RI-2.pdf

Decentralized Wastewater Management Case Studies <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic>

JAMESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND

PROBLEM
Jamestown is a small, island town dependent on private drinking water wells and individual wastewater systems. Poorly maintained onsite wastewater systems on undersized lots with high seasonal water tables were affecting groundwater quality. Studies revealed that 32% of the wastewater treatment systems in the area were contributing to nutrient and pathogen problems in private water wells (Legislative Press and Public Information Bureau, 2006).

SOLUTION
Jamestown adopted an ordinance requiring routine inspections of individual wastewater systems. A High Groundwater Table District also guides future development to protect drinking water quality.

CONTACT
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OVERVIEW
Jamestown is located on a small island situated in the middle of Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island. It is approximately nine miles long and one mile under which systems are inspected every three or five years based on size, type of system, and water use. Inspectors record the inspection information in the town's web-based database. The town has the authority to pump tanks at the owner's expense and, if necessary, can place liens on property for failure to reimburse the town for the pump-out owners. The fee funds the town's part-time wastewater management specialist.

RESULTS

- To date, 94% of all septic systems have had an initial maintenance inspection.

Est. Population: 5,400

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Model Program for Onsite Management in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

- ▶ Response to Chesapeake Bay Executive Order Strategy issued in May 2009
- ▶ Recommendations for reducing nitrogen from onsite systems based on previously published documents by EPA in coordination with state WIPs, CBP modeling efforts, and other current research and technologies
- ▶ Can be adopted in all or in part by each state if they so desire
- ▶ Applicable for other watersheds around the country
- ▶ <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/>

Coming Soon:

- ▶ SepticSmart Week – Tentatively for week of Sept. 16, 2013
 - Messaging and materials on the SS website – www.epa.gov/septicsmart
- ▶ SepticSmart for Tribal Communities
 - Information tailored to more closely address Tribal specific situations and terms



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www.epa.gov/septicmart

Main septic website:

<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/index.cfm>

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