

**On-Site Wastewater Strategy Task Force
Meeting #2
August 9, 2005 – 10:30 a.m. – Yoho Board Room
Indiana State Department of Health**

Members Present

Steve Adams, Facilitator
Chuck Andres
Bob Watkins
Richard Wise
James Sullivan
Rick Wajda
Don Jones
Terry L. Whitson

Dick Blazer
Bill Grant
Brad Lee

ISDH Staff

Alan Dunn
Teresa Watson, recording

Others Attending

Kris Conyers, Howard County HD
Alice Quinn, Grant County HD
Bob McKean

Welcome, Introductions & Announcements

Steve Adams, Director of Strategic Development for the Office of Rural Affairs, called the second meeting of the task force to order at 10:30 a.m., in the Robert O. Yoho Board Room of the Indiana State Department of Health. He welcomed all those attending as well as explaining his role as ‘facilitator’. He explained that the second meeting of the Task Force would be to hear information from local health departments and the Indiana Builder’s Association. He also stated the focus of the Task Force would be to combine the information presented at the first meeting with information heard at today’s meeting and develop recommendations for the future.

Three individuals from local health departments in Indiana presented information to the Task Force regarding activities in their respective counties.

Bill Grant from the LaGrange County Health Department discussed groundwater issues in LaGrange County and the extensive amount of data collected from his county. He noted that contamination of groundwater has been prevalent in LaGrange County but the source remains unknown. He discussed birth problems that he feels are directly related to the high levels of nitrate found in the water in some parts of the county.

Mr. Grant explained that all types of soils are found throughout the “lakes” are of the state. He also stated that septic systems in these areas don’t work as well as they should. Septic systems continue to be installed but approximately 4 out of every 6 installed, fail to work.

Mr. Grant asked the group to consider all the issues in Indiana to stop the sewage to stop the sewage treatment problems found in the state. Systems and procedures in place are not working, therefore, try something different.

Richard Wise noted that conventional septic systems are problems. Data should be collected on what systems actually work and the costs.

Kristine Conyers of the Howard County Health Department presented information to the group including five (5) detailed handouts from the Howard County septic program. She explained that septic installers in Howard County must be tested and certified to perform work in the county.

Howard County also has a 'septic committee' which is very active.

Mrs. Conyers also stated that education is provided to homeowners and that maintenance is stressed. She said that generally homeowners' knowledge of their septic system is very limited.

Alice Quinn from the Grant County Health Department also attended the meeting and made a short PowerPoint presentation with handouts.

Ms. Quinn echoed statements and suggestions from others at the meeting regarding the need for more training and education for local health departments and installers alike. She also stated the need for more direction from the state on certain issues.

The builders were next on the Task Force's agenda. Bob McKean, a 26 year veteran home builder gave the group a brief history of his background.

He asked the group to consider 4 things as they formulate their recommendations. Those things are:

- (1) communicate
- (2) take care of the environment
- (3) take care of water, and
- (4) Do what is best for Indiana.

He offered no solutions to the damaging cycle but he did share three suggestions – keep rules simple, train the locals, and base any and all guidelines on 'science' not perceived problems. He also cautioned against placing funding mandates on counties with no accompanying dollars.

Mr. McKean also asked the Task Force to maintain the focus. He also asked the group to find a way to allow Purdue University to do what they do best . . . research this problem and assist them with locating funding to study these issues in depth.

Mr. McKean also shared his hope for the creation of a different environment. He spoke of an environment that allows for problem solving, which would effect changes through well intentioned and well focused leadership.

He also asked the Task Force to consider asking that an additional seat be created on the ISDH Executive Board for an environmental professional and offered Dr. Don Jones of Purdue University as a possible nominee.

Mr. Adams thanked everyone attending for their information and input noting he heard many workable and useful recommendations.

Mr. Adams adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 – 10:30 a.m. – Robert O. Yoho Board Room - ISDH

On-Site Wastewater Task Force – August 9, 2005/twp – 8.17.05

Comments & Suggestions

- Create new ordinances based on failures
- Pursue grant monies for research and training
- Partner with Purdue University in research
- State regulations for LHDs to be trained and certified
- Provide a 'range' of training
- Improve and increase level of training
- Standardize LHDs
- Eliminate long waits for direction from the state
- Develop a new 'code'
- Maintain consistency
- Write rules with deference to the people's rights
- Create a different environment – SOLVE PROBLEMS
- Create an 'environmental' seat on the ISDH Executive Board – Dr. Don Jones