

Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Judith A. Monroe, M.D.
State Health Commissioner



Indiana State Department of Health

An Equal Opportunity Employer

MINUTES

On-site Wastewater Strategy Task Force Meeting # 4 September 13, 2005 – 10:30 a.m. – Yoho Board Room Indiana State Department of Health

Members Present

Steve Adams, Facilitator
Terry Whitson
Bob Watkins
Richard Wise
Rick Wadja

Don Jones
Chuck Andres
Dick Blazer
Brad Lee

ISDH Staff Present

Michelle Milliken
Teresa Watson, Recording

Other Interested Persons

Kris Conyers

Welcome

Steve Adams, Director of Strategic Development for the Office of Rural Affairs, opened the final meeting of the task force at 10:30 a.m. in the Robert O. Yoho Board Room of the Indiana State Department of Health.

Mr. Adams asked the members to review the minutes of the August 30th task force meeting and report any changes or corrections. Hearing no revision to the minutes he moved on and noted the numerous handouts for the meeting.

Further discussion on problems and issues relating to onsite sewage systems and development of recommendations for addressing onsite sewage system problems

Mr. Adams moved along to continue the discussions of problems and issues with the on-site program in the state. Discussions began with Terry Whitson walking the task force members through his draft of the final report. He explained the nine categories and gave brief explanations of the sub-items under each recommendation.

Chuck Andres noted to the group that the draft report mirrored the 2003 report which was drafted by a similar group. That report also recommended that ISDH was the correct place to channel the issues. However, the 2003 report recommended that partnerships be developed between ISDH, Purdue University and possibly Indiana State University to deal with various issues raised in the report. Mr. Andres also noted that nothing was ever done with the 2003 report and questioned what the ISDH is actually looking for from this task force.

Mr. Whitson responded that the ISDH was looking for solid direction from local health departments as well as installers. He continued that some changes to the recommendations were to (1) gain a good grasp of data and (2) find ways to enforce the current rules.

Mr. Whitson questioned the Task Force members regarding two things:

- (1) Where is the ISDH failing customers?
- (2) What could be done to make improvements?

The consensus of the group was for ISDH to become more proactive and more open minded. The ISDH staff needs to change their attitudes and solve simple problems.

It was suggested that training provided by the ISDH not be the same as it has been in the past 20 years. A mandate for appropriate training is needed to force people to get the proper training.

Mr. Jones asked if a “hands on” training could be provided to installers. A discussion followed regarding some land that was offered in the past by Purdue University for such training. This will be investigated further.

A document generated from the Indiana Land Resources Work Group was referred to in making a case for certification and licensure. It also sets out information regarding a model of how Purdue University perceives certification and licensure as well as paving the way for collaboration between ISDH and Purdue.

The topic of fees was discussed at length. The idea of a “committee of partners” was suggested to fund the certification and licensure and the collection and sharing of data.

The consensus was if the state were to collect fees for certification and licensure these fees should be ‘dedicated funds’. No one wants to pay more but would not mind if the money went for something substantial giving back to the program.

One suggestion was for ‘user fees’ for installers to pay in each county in which they would like to do business.

Conclusion

Mr. Adams asked for concluding comments from around the table.

Rick Wadja: Appreciated the group and would not like to see internal staff writing a rule. He also stated he had ‘issues’ with ‘guidance documents’.

Dick Blazer: Thanked the group for the opportunity to participate and share views and be part of the task force.

Bob Watkins: He also stated his appreciation for being part of the task force and for the openness during the process.

Chuck Andres: Would like to see research by Purdue and fully investigate the use of land offered by Purdue for test sites.

Richard Wise: He stated his appreciation for being part of the task force and for the reaffirmation that we are still on the right track.

Mr. Adams stated his pleasure at the amount of work accomplished by the group in such a short period of time and thanked everyone for their time and effort. He noted that the sense he was getting from the group was that no new rule was needed at this time.

Mr. Whitson will work on the final draft of the report and from there it will go to the task force members for comment. The final report will then go the Commissioner of the ISDH.