Lake George Septic Initiative Program

September 13, 2016
Public Information Meeting #1
Outline

• Town of Lake George Septic Initiative Program
  – History
  – Purpose and Goals

• 2015 DEC WQIP Grant
  – Work Plan / Tasks
  – Final Report / Goals

• Town of Lake George ALLUP Amendment
  – Ch. 115 Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems
Town of Lake George
Septic Initiative Program
TOLG Septic Initiative Program (SIP) startup

- 2012 underwater photos of algal blooms in Lake George were presented to TLG Supervisor with the identification that the algae indicated “probable organic pollution” (16 PPI)
- Algae grows in abundance where it is being fed with nutrients (excess fertilizers, stormwater runoff and septic systems not functioning optimally)
- Potential correlation between failing or sub-standard septic systems and excessive algae growth in the lake
- Water quality issues from wastewater and other land uses are not limited to Lake George
2014 Algal Blooms

Harris Bay (Queensbury)

Stewart Brook (Bolton)

Assembly Point (Queensbury)

Diamond Point (TLG)
TOLG Septic Initiative Program
Purpose and Goals

• On May 29, 2013, the Consolidated Board of Health introduced the “Septic Initiative Program.” This program’s purpose is to inventory and assess all existing onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) within the town, with the goal to ensure that OWTS (also known as septic systems) are functioning optimally.

• Completion of the “Pre-Inspection Worksheet for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems” is a first step and will assist the town in determining OWTS that are not functioning optimally and therefore may be polluting our drinking water and Lake George. These will be used to develop an inventory, which will be assessed and analyzed in terms of functionality.

• Obtain support from adjacent Lake George basin municipalities in either joining the program or creating their own.

• Hold information meetings and training seminars for the public
Pre-Inspection Worksheet for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)

Date _______________________________ Tax Map ID # __________________________

Name __________________________________________
Address _______________________________________

Lake address ___________________________________

Phone _________________________________ (home)    _________________________________ (cell)

Email ________________________________

SEPTIC SYSTEM SKETCH

FINDINGS
Unknown _________ [check here if you do not know the specifics about wastewater treatment on your property]

Septic system sewage flows into:
- Concrete septic tank __________ gals (size of tank)
- Plastic septic tank __________ gals (size of tank)
- Metal septic tank __________ gals (size of tank)
- Holding Tank __________ gals (size of tank)
- Cesspool __________ gals (size and construction of cesspool)

Effluent from septic tank flows to:
- Soil Treatment Area (STA) _______
- Seepage pit / drywell _______
- Eljen ETU _______
- Puraflo ETU _______
- Other (please describe) ________________________________

OTHER INFORMATION

Age of septic system ___________ Distance to lake or stream ____________ feet
Age of home _________________ # of bedrooms __________

Garbage disposal? Yes No (please circle)
Water treatment system? Yes No (please circle)
Sump pump to OWTS? Yes No (please circle)

DATE of last septic tank pump out _______________ Septic hauler _______________________

<< Please attach a copy of your recent inspection and pump out receipts >>
Inventory Started 2014-2015

Four Phases
Program Boundaries

- Phase I – Diamond Point Area
- Phase II – Cannon Point to Hearthstone
- Phase III – Hearthstone to English Brook
- Phase IV – East Side (Plum Point to Wiawaka, and Elm School south)
2015 Annual Summary

TLG Septic Initiative Program
2015 Annual Summary

Phase I (Carriage Hill to Diamond Point Rd and south to Orcutt Bay):
- 46 parcels responded and are signed off
- 16 parcels are in process
- 6 parcels did not respond to Pre-Inspection Worksheet

Phase II (Cannon Point south to Hearthstone Campground):
- 30 parcels responded and are signed off
- 25 parcels are in process
- 22 parcels did not respond to Pre-Inspection Worksheet

Phase III (Hearthstone Campground south to English Brook):
- 39 parcels responded and are signed off
- 7 parcels are in process
- 15 parcels did not respond to Pre-Inspection Worksheet

Phase IV (Plum Point south to Wiawaka Holiday House):
- 28 parcels responded and are signed off
- 7 parcels are in process
- 27 parcels did not respond to Pre-Inspection Worksheet

Note: the reporting of parcels above does not include counts for motels, condos, townhouses and homeowner associations (some of which have SPDES permits). The majority responded to the request for information.

Education and Training for Engineers, Contractors, Homeowners, Town Boards and staff
- March 3, 2015 Clarus Fusion, White Knight and small community systems
- March 17, 2015 Onsite Wastewater Training Network (OTN)
- April 8, 2015 BusseGT
- April 22, 2015 Orenco
- December 8, 2015 EcoFlo
- December 16, 2015 Presby Environmental and Clarus Fusion

https://lakegeorgetown.org/departments/septic-initiative-program/
2015 DEC Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) Grant
Round 12 (2015) DEC WQIP Grant

- Awarded $104,000 for the Septic Initiative Program (SIP) in December 2015 (CFA)
- Program vastly extrapolated, with 6 major “objectives” or tasks to be completed over the next 12 months (18 month project started in April 2016)
- Brought on the FUND for Lake George as contractor and project administrator, as well as Darren Freshwater Institute for Algae testing / water sampling and Chazen for mapping
Septic Initiative Program Tasks

- Inventory and Assessment of all OWTS within boundaries (500 ft of LG and 100 ft of AA-S streams)
- SIP Report and Mapping
- Municipal Outreach and Coordination (all LG municipalities, and public outreach/training)
- Algae testing / water sampling (2016 / 2017)
- High Priority areas / Funding for replacement
- TOLG OWTS Code (ALLUP) Amendment
Preliminary Inventory / Worksheet Findings

- 'Concerns' being identified include metal septic tanks (that may or may not be corroded and leaking) and cesspools. Possible failures in soil treatment areas (STA) and seepage pits are also being looked at.
- Estimate that 10%+ of existing properties within 500 feet of Lake George and 100 feet of Class AA-Special streams in the TLG potentially need retrofit or some level of replacement of OWTS.
- Preliminary count for retrofit or replacement potential is estimated at approximately 50-70 properties within the Town of Lake George; roughly 10 properties in boundary have already upgraded.
- Estimate for failing or substandard OWTS do not include properties with multi-unit homeowner associations (HOAs), motels or townhouses.
SIP Progress – GIS Mapping
SIP Progress – Sampling

Town of Lake George Septic Initiative Program
A Program for Sampling Algae and Monitoring Water Quality

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June 2016
SIP Progress – Sampling
SIP Progress – Inventory

- Town files reviewed (30-40% response)
- Initial survey sent to property owners
- Schedule site inspections
- Follow up surveys to remaining properties
SIP Progress – Outreach

• Training Sessions for professionals and contractors
• Use Initiative and districts as models for watershed
• Arrange a Septic Summit
Moving forward

- Follow through on any remaining OWTS data collection for all properties within 500 feet of Lake George and 100 feet of all Class AA-Special streams and tributaries
- Complete SIP Report complete with analysis and mapping
- Develop future lake-wide strategy for the Septic Initiative Program and continue discussions with all municipalities within the Lake George watershed
- Continue to link educational information, including OWTS info, to the TLG website for resident access and ongoing education and hold seminars and informational meetings
- Put a plan in place for long-term algal monitoring with the FUND
- Work with the FUND and high-priority area property owners on OWTS replacement and permitting in 2017/2018
Final Report and Goals of Initiative

• Submitted to NYSDEC December 2018.
• Utilize inventory data, GIS mapping and sampling to assess system conditions and prioritize areas for replacement and upgrades.
• The FUND has committed $25,000 for initial OWTS upgrade based on prioritizing criteria.
Questions?

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Thank You

Thanks for attending! Please feel free to grab some handouts on the way out.