

## Keeping it Local—Repair Loans Available County-wide

Jim Hoesel is a septic system installer with Diamond Construction in Sequim. So when Clallam County HHS Environmental Health section (EH) informed the Hoesels that their septic system needed to be updated, Jim knew how to fix it. What he and his wife, Bettina, didn't know was how they were going to pay for it.

As a licensed installer, Jim learned about the Clean Water Loan available from Craft3 – which can finance up-front and construction costs including septic system design, permits and installation.

Jim gave Craft3 a call. Soon, the Hoesels had a loan from Craft3 to update their septic system. "The folks at Craft3 made it easy to get everything taken care of on the schedule we needed," says Jim. "We knew we had to deal with the out-dated system on the property when we bought it, and having Craft3 involved was a big relief for us."

Craft3 also made additional funds available for annual operation and maintenance service so the Hoesel family wouldn't have to worry about having problems again.

Craft3 partnered with Clallam County in 2011 to offer its Clean Water Loan, now available for septic repairs throughout the County and many other areas of Puget Sound. Part of Craft3's mission is "Strengthening Resilience" in communities and the environment by reducing environmental threats.

To learn more about Clean Water Loans or to apply, visit [www.craft3.org/CleanWater](http://www.craft3.org/CleanWater). You can also contact Craft3 at [CleanWater@craft3.org](mailto:CleanWater@craft3.org) or (877) 480-5765. Additional information and success stories are on the website.

For specific information about septic repairs in Clallam County, contact Environmental Health at (360) 417-2593.

If you have questions about the commercial loan products Craft3 has available in your area, please contact Brian Kuh, Craft3 Business Leader, (360) 565-2063; located at 905 West 9th St, Suite 221, Port Angeles.



*Jim Hoesel installing a new drainfield for his family's property, which needed an upgrade after they bought it.*

Photo courtesy Bettina Hoesel



CLALLAM COUNTY  
*Environmental Health*  
SERVICES

### **Tips & Tid-Bits from EH**

- ◆ **Craft3 low-interest OSS repair loans are now available County-wide**
- ◆ **EH is strengthening its ability to enforce existing OSS codes (one focus for upcoming code revisions)**
- ◆ **EH will conduct a public survey of OSS owners' knowledge and experiences later this year**
- ◆ **This special color issue has been mailed to all onsite septic system (OSS) owners in the County!**

# The Latest on Septic Inspection Requirements

Nothing is new... the requirements are here. They've been here since 2008. They're not going anywhere.

Despite the law, Environmental Health is often asked "Why do I have to inspect my septic system? It works fine!" In a recent grant-funded project, EH staff worked with 108 homeowners to inspect their septic systems, with the following results:

- ✓ 61 percent (!) were found to have something that required some sort of maintenance
- ✓ 27 had leaking or broken risers
- ✓ 24 needed pumping
- ✓ 6 had pump problems
- ✓ 6 had clogged outlet filters (see article below)
- ✓ 3 required immediate maintenance to avoid failure

**Here is a reminder:**

## CONVENTIONAL GRAVITY SEPTIC SYSTEMS

**Must be inspected at least once every three years.**

## PRESSURIZED ALTERNATIVE SEPTIC SYSTEMS (those with pumps)

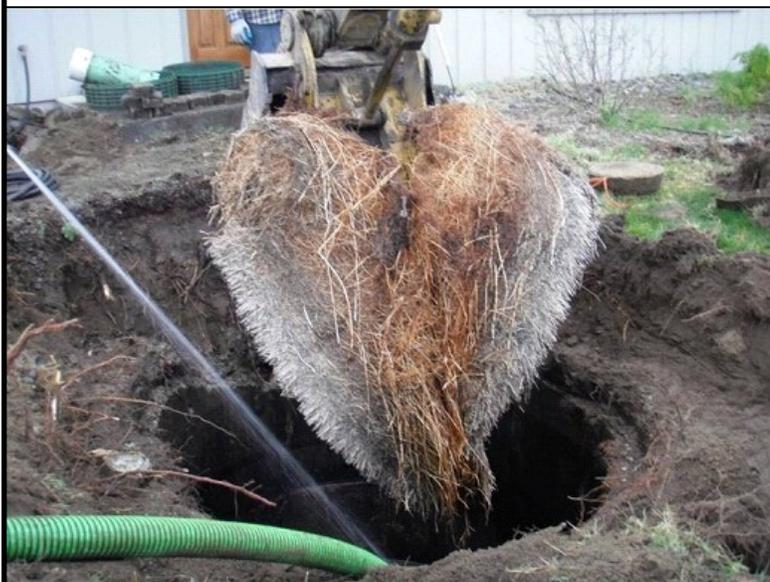
**Must be inspected EVERY year.**

## O&M Tip: OUTLET BAFFLE FILTERS

Outlet filters are fine meshed screens placed into the outlet side of a septic tank and are designed to prevent solid material from reaching a drainfield. A filter is seen as "cheap insurance" for drainfield protection. Did you know that the most expensive part of a septic system replacement is the drainfield itself? Protecting the drainfield from premature failure due to solids clogging the pipes and the soil just makes financial sense.

Outlet baffle filters became a part of septic system design in Clallam County around the year 2000. If you have a system designed and installed after 1999, you more than likely will have an outlet filter. In any case, it is in your best

### Another common problem: ROOTS!



*Isn't that sweet? A heart-shaped wad of cedar roots is removed from a septic tank in Sequim. Root invasion is one of the most common problems with systems that haven't been regularly inspected. Roots will invade a tank, distribution lines, and drainfield lines if left unchecked.*

Photo credit: Carl Bourm

interest as a septic system owner to check the outlet side of your tank to see if a filter is present. If your septic tank is buried and never been uncovered, you probably do not have a filter. Depending on the condition of your tank you may be able to add a filter to the outlet. Contact a maintenance provider for more information; a list of licensed providers is on the EH website (web addresses listed on reverse).

A filter can become a huge problem if the homeowner is unaware of its existence. Without regular cleaning, the filter will clog up and sewage will eventually back up into your home. Many house calls for septic system problems turn out to be due to a clogged outlet filter. Save yourself some money and aggravation and check your filter every 6 to 12 months to see if it needs to be cleaned. Most O&M providers will clean your filter for you as a part of annual maintenance—and may train you to do it yourself, since it is so important!



## The Water Column

### Where is *Here*?

May is “*Puget Sound Starts Here*” month, but what does that mean to us out here in Clallam County?

“*Here*” is where each of us lives. It’s our backyard. It’s our driveway. It’s our house.

It’s our neighborhood. *Here* is everywhere in the Puget Sound region—which includes Clallam County! What we (and our pets, cars, businesses, etc.) do *here*, where we live, can impact water quality throughout Puget Sound if we’re not careful.

Anyone can join [PugetSoundStartsHere.org](http://PugetSoundStartsHere.org) and submit stories and videos of your own to this great new website.



Hurricane Ridge and Dungeness Spit are featured videos already, and there is a story about geocaching—“a free, real-world outdoor treasure hunt” using GPS technology.

Celebrate Puget Sound by getting outside, but also by preventing pollution *here*—at home, in the yard, with your pets, and with your car. After all, Puget Sound starts with the Strait of Juan de Fuca!

**I POOP.**  
You pick it up. Any questions?

**SCOOP PET POOP**  
Puget Sound is in trouble and you can help fix it. Rain washes bacteria from pet waste into storm drains, streams, and ultimately into Puget Sound. Use a bag to pick up dog poop and put it in the trash. Learn other ways you can protect water quality.

[Puget Sound Starts Here.org](http://PugetSoundStartsHere.org)



The Clean Water Herald is a periodic newsletter supported by members of the Clean Water Work Group, to inform and promote good stewardship of our shared natural resources.

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# Spring Septics Events

### Septics 101 Online

In 2012 we updated the Septics 101 video. This 30-minute video is posted on the Washington Dept. of Health website, which is linked from our Septics 101 page.

*Septics 101 information, including a link to the online class:*

[http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite\\_septic101.html](http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_septic101.html)

### Septics 101 In-Person

*None scheduled at this time; the website will be updated when classes are scheduled*

(Locations vary)

### Septics 201 Online

Also known as **Do-It-Yourself (DIY) inspection training.**

Funding has been obtained to make this online class available later in 2013. Watch our website for notice!  
[www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/Septics201DIY.html](http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/Septics201DIY.html)

## Inside this “tIssue”:

- ◆ Testimonial from a local septic loan recipient
- ◆ Inspection requirements
- ◆ Enforcement update
- ◆ Public survey announcement
- ◆ O&M Tips
- ◆ Puget Sound Starts Here



This newsletter is mailed to onsite septic system owners in Clallam County using property owner addresses on file with the Clallam County Assessor's Office. If you have received this newsletter erroneously, please contact us.



## Potty Talk

According to Janine Reed, Clallam County onsite septic O&M program coordinator, “greener” grass over your septic **tank** is NOT a good thing... since it probably indicates a leak! In a tank in good working condition the heat generated by all that sewage “processing” often dries out the soil and grass above.

On the other hand, your **drainfield** area IS likely to be greener during the dry season.

Janine advises to never irrigate over your drainfield or septic tank—or you could overload the system and cause a failure!

## Clallam County Onsite Septics Program Websites

Onsite septic systems (OSS) in general:	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite.html</a>
O&M program including provider list:	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_om.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_om.html</a>
Find “as-builts” and other permit records:	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_asbuilt.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_asbuilt.html</a>
OSS educational page:	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_maintenance.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_maintenance.html</a>
Septics Edition newsletter (all issues):	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/ehnewsletter1.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/ehnewsletter1.html</a>
Septics 101 classes:	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_septic101.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_septic101.html</a>
Septics 201 (Do-It-Yourself inspections):	<a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/Septics201DIY.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/Septics201DIY.html</a>