

# Septics Edition

Second Flush (MRA only), "tIssue" #2

Summer 2012



## Going Green, or Red-to-Green!

So, what is "Red-to-Green"? It is the name given to the program where the County is identifying parcels where there is no recorded information about the septic system in our files (*designated RED*), parcels where the system is known to exist but has not been geographically located or recently inspected (*YELLOW*), and parcels that have a recorded and fully inspected system (*GREEN*).

What does Red-to-Green mean to you? Think of it like a traffic light. For example, if you wanted to develop your property in some way that required a permit (build, subdivide, etc.) and there wasn't information about the septic system on file, your parcel would be listed in the County database as *RED* and you would have to *STOP* until you submitted the necessary information. But if for example we have the location drawing of the system but no recent inspection data, it would be *YELLOW* and

you would have to *SLOW DOWN* and provide more details in order to proceed. When we have a drawing AND recent inspection information on file, your parcel would be *GREEN* – all requirements have been met and you can *GO* ahead with the next step of the project.

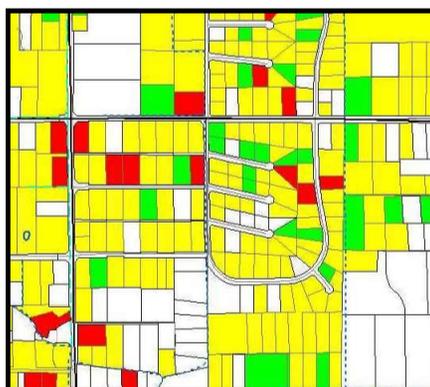
In February 2011 there were 134 Red parcels in a 6-square-mile area fronting on Dungeness Bay, where development was known to exist but for which there was no septic information on file. The County did in-depth file research, sent letters and conducted site visits to get specific information on systems and encouraged all homeowners to have their systems inspected. In a little more than a year, **the number of Red parcels went from 134 down to 30—thanks to many cooperative homeowners!**

The project area was doubled in size to the south in April 2012, which added 181 Red parcels; in two months that number was down to 149, thanks mostly to matching septic records with the proper parcel file.

The Red-to-Green project started when the County received Centennial Clean Water grant funding through the Washington State Department of Ecology to update database records, locate septic systems for which there were no records, and encourage inspections and system upgrades such as risers and outlet filters when possible.

Locating and monitoring septic systems helps the County identify projects that will improve water quality and the overall health of the environment. Getting your property to Green status – and keeping it Green with regular maintenance and inspections – helps all of us protect our natural resources. *GO GREEN!*

The Washington State code regulating onsite septic systems (246-272A WAC) requires Clallam County to develop and maintain an inventory of all known onsite septic systems, and also requires all septic systems to be inspected on a regular basis. Conventional gravity systems must be inspected at least **every three years**; others must be done **every year**.



July 2010



July 2012

Typical parcel maps made by Clallam County Environmental Health showing septic system inspection status for a neighborhood in the MRA. Note that several red parcels for which no records existed two years ago have turned yellow or green since records were submitted and the database updated. Note also that some green parcels have gone back to yellow since their inspection is overdue!

**RED** = No septic records on file

**YELLOW** = Records exist but inspection status not current

**GREEN** = Records and inspection status are current

### Clallam County Onsite Program Websites

**\*\*Find as-builts and other permit records—NEW:** [http://websrv2.clallam.net/tm\\_bin/tmw\\_cmd.pl?tmw\\_cmd=QueryForm&tmw\\_query=Parcel](http://websrv2.clallam.net/tm_bin/tmw_cmd.pl?tmw_cmd=QueryForm&tmw_query=Parcel)  
 Onsite septic systems (OSS) in general: <http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite.html>  
 O&M program; inspection requirements: [http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite\\_om.html](http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_om.html)  
 Septics Edition newsletter (all issues): <http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/ehnewsletter1.html>



## The Water Column

### Jump In—the Water’s Fine!

Our marine beaches are beautiful and the water is certainly refreshing to swim in, but is the water quality fine? To find out, the US EPA sponsors water testing at popular recreational beaches throughout the nation with the “BEACH” program. This summer local volunteers are sampling weekly at Cline Spit, Hollywood Beach, and Salt Creek. The Makah Tribe samples year-round at several beaches around Cape Flattery.

The BEACH program tests for “enterococci” bacteria which indicate whether feces and related pathogens may be present. If a monitored beach has bacterial pollution problems it will be posted with a swimming advisory sign: yellow means caution and red means closure. You can view advisories and historical data (or register for updates via social media) at the website: [www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/beach](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/beach)

So far this season, the water *is* fine! To help prevent future swimming beach closures,

- α Practice good hygiene when you visit (especially with kids and babies)—and clean up after your pet.
- α Dispose of boat waste at marine sewage pump stations.
- α Maintain your septic system.

Environmental Health works with state Health and Ecology departments to maintain the BEACH program in Clallam County’s jurisdiction. To volunteer for 2013 BEACH sampling, call 360-417-2543.

Remember, beaches receive runoff from everything uphill including yards, streets, and streams—and water quality usually is worse after a heavy rainfall. So jump in—but don’t swallow the water!

### Clean Water Herald—Septics Edition Summer 2012

**Clallam County Environmental Health Services**  
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Port Angeles, WA 98362

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**Septic Repair  
SUMMER LOAN SPECIAL!**  
Reduced rates from Craft3—  
apply by Sept. 30, 2012  
<http://www.craft3.org/borrow/septicloans>  
Or call 360-642-4265 ext. 151

The address used is the taxing address on record in the Clallam County Assessor’s Office for one or more properties that are (or are likely, according to land use information) utilizing an onsite septic system.



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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# Summer Septics Events

Septics 101 <u>Online</u>	A 30-minute video and quiz are available through the link below. When you’ve completed the course and quiz, print and save your Certificate of Completion.		
<p>Take Septics 101 <u>online</u> or register for in-person classes at <a href="http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_septic101.html">http://www.clallam.net/HHS/EnvironmentalHealth/onsite_septic101.html</a> (if you don’t have internet, register by leaving a message at 360-417-2529)</p>			
Septics 101 <u>In-Person</u>	Sept. 18 Nov. 8	6:00 - 8:30pm	Dungeness River Audubon Center; west end of Hendrickson Rd., Sequim
Septics 201 <u>Depends on Funding</u>	Also known as <b>Do-It-Yourself (DIY) inspection training</b> . This class will train the homeowner how to perform a certified inspection of their septic system.		