

Septic Sense: A Septic System Installation and Management Workshop for Landowners

An Overview

March 6 2014



Land Stewardship Centre

www.landstewardship.org

Land Stewardship Centre

Who We Are

- Established in 1996
- Not-for-profit, charitable organization
- Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors
- Supported by program advisory committees
- Operated by core staff



Land Stewardship Centre

What we do

- We help people:
 - Understand the value of ecological services
 - Recognize important stewardship priorities
 - Apply key stewardship principles in land and resource management decisions
 - Learn from those who provide good stewardship examples



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How we do it:

- Facilitate partnerships
- Collaborate to support development of stewardship practices, programs and policies
- Help support provincial and national initiatives
- Work with individuals and organizations responsible for managing land and associated natural resources
- Provide services, tools and develop resources



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Our approach:

- 1. Engage** – Identify the need
 - Individuals, community groups, partners
- 2. Inform** – Build the network
 - Partnership development
- 3. Enable** – Develop the solutions
 - Programs, resources and tools



Background

- Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association (AWWOWA)
 - Closer to Home (C2H) project
 - Established with the goal of:
“strengthening and renewing capacity and expertise for safe drinking water and responsibly managed wastewater systems across Alberta's smaller rural centres”



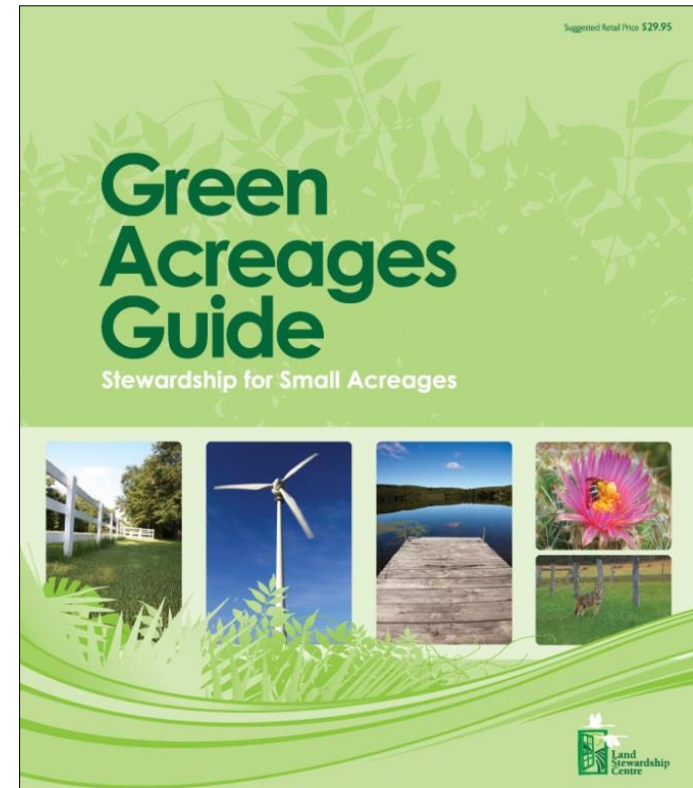
Background

- Project: Enhance capacity to manage private systems
 - Develop resources to improve landowner knowledge of septic system installation and maintenance
 - Familiar with LSC through the Green Acreages Guide program



Background

- Green Acreages Guide program
 - Developed with municipal partners
- Products
 - Self directed workbook for landowners
 - Information booklet
 - Workshop for landowners



Background

- Green Acreage Guide workshop provides an introduction to natural assets on the property, the ecosystem services they provide, and responsible management
 - Topic overview
 - Worksheets
 - Management options
 - Further resources



Septic System

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Are the premises connected to a municipal sewer system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If NO: Is a sewer system planned in the next three years?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the property serviced by a septic system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If YES: Is there a permit for the system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the septic field at least 10 m from a well?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the septic field at least 50 m from surface water?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has the tank been pumped in the last three years?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the tank of an adequate size for the dwelling[s]?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a second drain field or space for it?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it an "alternative" or "engineered" septic system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the septic system connected to a holding tank?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you know how often the tank needs pumping?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Underground Storage Tanks

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Are there any underground storage tanks for oil, aviation fuel, gasoline or other hazardous liquids on the property?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Property Boundaries

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Are there any special zoning regulations, setbacks, shoreline protection bylaws or environmental reserves?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there any adjoining road allowances for public water access, including old shoreline road allowances?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there any easements (including conservation easements) or restrictive covenants registered against the property?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are you aware of any encroachments, unregistered easements, or unregistered rights-of-way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Erosion

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Are there any runoff control measures (e.g. culverts or swales) in place?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are you aware of any erosion problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are you aware of any neighbours who have any erosion problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there erosion control structures on the property or nearby?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If YES: Are all approvals and licences being transferred with sale of the property?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other Services

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Does the municipality provide curb-side garbage pickup?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is reliable high speed Internet and cell phone service available?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Background

- Green Acreage Guide workshops available since Fall 2013
- Feedback from workshops
 - Is there a septic workshop we can put on for landowners?
 - Specific
 - Detailed



Background

- Conducted background research into available resources
 - *Septic Smart* programs in BC and Ontario
 - Municipal partners directed us to AOWMA landowner workshop



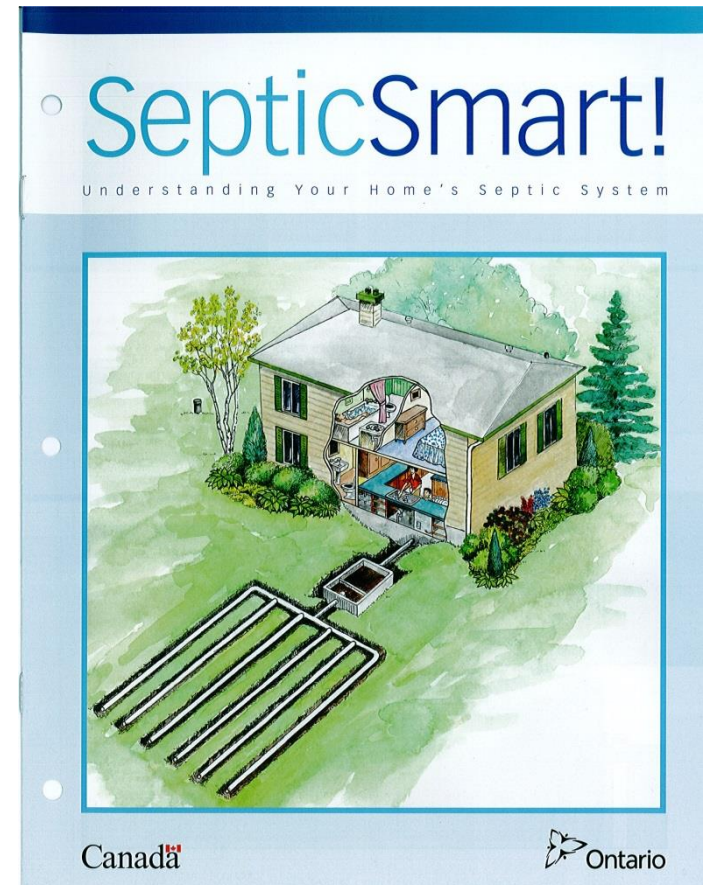
Background

- AOWMA Landowner Workshop
 - Presentation
 - Homeowners manual
 - Information on designing and managing a private system
 - Includes space for installation and maintenance records
 - Troubleshooting guide for common questions and problems



Background

- AOWMA worked with Columbia Shuswap Regional District to develop the BC Septic Smart program



The Opportunity

- Develop an integrated and enhanced landowner workshop
- Based on examples of existing programs and the need expressed by partners



The Opportunity

- Currently, landowner extension is offered by:
 - AOWMA
 - Municipal Affairs
 - Municipalities
- Create one comprehensive resource for landowners
 - Installation: licensed contractors
 - Maintenance: regular checks
 - Regulations



The Opportunity

- Goal:
 - More consistent management and maintenance of septic systems
 - Better compliance with requirements
- Leverage AOWMA and LSC partnership networks to create more awareness among stakeholders
 - Support partner needs, especially around issues associated with increased development



The Opportunity

- Complements the *Working Well* program
 - GoA led program
 - Partners with municipalities to host private water well information workshops for landowners
- Align workshop style and delivery
 - Partner with municipalities to deliver workshop
 - Invite participation by local installers, health department staff, enforcement staff



The Opportunity

- Update information based on existing AOWMA materials and create other supporting materials using the *Septic Smart* example
 - Information booklet
 - Fact sheets
 - Case studies



The Opportunity

- Objective 1:
 - Improve landowner knowledge of appropriate septic system installation and management
- Objective 2:
 - Make workshops widely accessible by partners and easy to deliver
- Objective 3:
 - Implement consistent workshop content and delivery



Our Approach

- Develop a Business Case
 - Project description and objectives
 - Stakeholders
 - Describe options
 - Qualitative and quantitative analysis
- In progress



Our Approach

- Establish an Advisory Committee
 - Membership representative of stakeholders
 - AOWMA
 - Regulators
 - Municipalities
 - Industry (contractors and engineers)
 - Develop Terms of Reference
- Next step



Our Approach

- Timeline
 - Spring/Summer 2014: program development
 - Fall 2014 – Winter 2015: pilot workshops
 - Spring 2015: program evaluation period



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