

A Fact Sheet about BMAP and Florida's Homeowners

A requirement to have a BMAP (Basin Management Action Plan) for water quality restoration is required by Florida Law Section 403.067(7) to be effective July 2018 with a 20-year implementation plan. It means that over the next 20 years, the amount of nitrogen emanating from spring vents across the state must consistently drop to a level of .286 mg/l (drinking water is 10 mg/L).

Primary sources of nitrogen are identified as fertilizer and septic systems. According to the Wekiva BMAP, 71% of nitrogen comes from various sources other than septic systems. Fertilizer from golf courses, agriculture and residences contributes far more nitrogen to groundwater that reaches the spring. 55,000 septic systems in the Wekiva BMAP are said to be responsible for 29% and are targeted for "remediation" and must be replaced with an approved sewage treatment method.

While the law allows fertilizer contributions of nitrogen to be governed by voluntary reductions known as Best Management Practices, **septic systems are to be governed by mandates that reduce the nitrogen contribution to zero.**

BMAP, as it is presently written, allows only three "remediation" alternatives to passive conventional septic systems. **Choice #1 and Choice #2 require electricity to operate and will negatively impact you.**

1. Advanced Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (AOWTS)

- AOWTS are based on pre-set periodic dosing. They require lifestyle changes to operate. Example: Limiting daily laundry, no large parties, require restarts after vacations, designed for specific family size. Some variations do not function when certain medications enter the waste stream.
- Depend on homeowner providing constant electricity.
- Require annual fees and maintenance contracts and repairs due to multiple mechanical pumps, circuitry, filters, etc. with a limited life span far less than present passive septic systems. Frequent repairs can add 50% of the capital cost of a system.

2. Low Pressure Sewers (grinders or "STEP")

- Typically, have only a one-day capacity
- Depend on homeowner providing constant electricity
- Have a mechanical pump with a 3-5 year life expectancy and may require service contracts.
- May require homeowner to grant property easement to county to provide service.
- Power or mechanical failures can mean evacuation, exposure to raw sewage, and property damage.

3. Gravity Fed Sewers

- Is a preferred solution since they do not require individual homeowners to provide the source of electricity, preserve your property values, and contribute fully to the goals of the State's BMAP program – No nitrogen contribution is assigned to spring vent readings if sewers replace septic system.

ISSUE: Any solution that requires electricity, whether electrically powered grinder sewers or advanced septic systems, lowers property values, does not function in severe weather events, impacts how families must live, and is subject to frequent mechanical failure. Your health, your finances, your property and your property values are at risk. Traditional gravity sewers are the only acceptable solution.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING: Florida's Department of Health (FDOH) has systematically ignored the need for accurate science. They have also spent \$5 Million dollars and failed to fulfill the legislative directive to find a passive nitrogen reducing alternative to conventional systems. The agency has responded only to the interests of lobbyists from the septic system industry, agriculture, fertilizer companies and the environmental protection groups seeking to prevent growth or buy conservation land. In the meantime, homeowners are being mandated to comply with nitrogen reduction standards with no acceptable, passive alternative. Absent good science and viable passive alternatives, it is probable that when BMAP's twenty years of mandates on septic system remediation plans are complete, millions and millions of dollars will be spent, and there will be no significant benefit to Florida's environment. The State will only know if septic systems were the problem after taking billions of dollars out of homeowners and taxpayers' pockets and waiting 20 years.

BEWARE OF "FREE" SOLUTIONS: The State of Florida will make grant money available to aid cities and counties in complying with BMAP requirements. AOWTS and low-pressure grinder sewers offered to homeowners will only cover capital costs, not on-going costs! Choices 1 and 2 incur annual fees and/or maintenance contracts, will require life style changes for homeowners, and easements will reduce your property rights. **KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY!** Your cities and counties will be offering "solutions" that remove as many septic systems as possible at the lowest possible cost to get BMAP compliance credits. **The impact on your life is not necessarily a priority.**

WHAT HOMEOWNERS SHOULD DO

- ✓ **CONDUCT A PETITION DRIVE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.** Demand a NON-ELECTRIC SOLUTION! Gravity fed Sewers are the only acceptable solution.
- ✓ **CONTACT THEIR COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES** who are responsible for developing and implementing a septic system remediation plan for their community. Interview candidates running for county, city, and state office. Know their position on these issues.
- ✓ **HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT IS ESSENTIAL** as a powerful voice in the fight to protect property values. Get your HOA involved in meeting with elected officials.
- ✓ **CONTACT YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS IN TALLAHASSEE.** Voice your concerns and make them accountable to you for their votes on environmental protection laws and appropriations of taxpayer dollars to pay for these mandates. Billions of dollars are at stake, as is your investment in your home.
- ✓ **GET ACTIVELY INVOLVED!** In the past eight years, the state-wide homeowner effort has stopped unjust rules and regulations, repealed and replaced bad legislation, and lobbied successfully with state agencies on behalf of 2,500,000 million homeowners.

WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN DO IT AGAIN!

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