

## PROPERTY OWNERS WASTEWATER SYSTEM ASSESSMENT AND VALUATION

Owners looking to sell their property are often faced with increasingly sophisticated wastewater (septic) system inspections that involve cameras and other technologies. While the information derived from such inspections may be valuable, it can produce many unanswered questions for both the seller and the potential buyer.

In an effort to help answer these questions before they arise, we have put together a “Seller’s Package” of engineering services that include a site assessment, a discussion of the wastewater system life expectancy and failure definition, and a cost analysis for a replacement system that includes a fair share approach between the seller and any potential buyer based on the depreciation of the existing system.

Here are a few highlights of the Seller’s Package:

- *Site Assessment* will include a review of the property through online database searches and field surveys to identify potential issues of concern related to the septic system. The assessment does not include soil tests, required to determine the suitability of the site to handle a new septic system, but is a prelude to such testing, if requested.
- *Cost Analysis* is based on the findings of the assessment and the average septic system replacement costs for the region. Soil data from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is used to form assumptions about the type of septic system that may be suitable for the site. Age and other factors are used for the fair share calculation.
- *Narrative* that discusses the following:
  - The definition of a failed septic system according to the current state rules;
  - A summary of the site assessment findings;
  - The method for depreciation of the septic system;
  - A breakdown of the estimated costs of a replacement septic system; and
  - The fair share calculation for eventual septic system replacement.

We hope that you will take advantage of this service. We recommend completing this work prior to the placing the property on the real estate market so you are well prepared for the impending inspection. We are often asked to provide a second opinion after an inspection has been done. However, at that point it is difficult to negotiate the findings of the inspection, especially when faced with the visual evidence of a camera and a closing date. We like to think of this as a “**first opinion**”, done early in the process to avoid the pressure of a pending closing and the often poor decision making that comes when there are such time constraints.

Let us know if we can help with your project!