

Understanding Challenges to Septic System Management

Mackenzie Gregg

June 9, 2026

Our discussion today is solely the responsibility of the authors and is not intended to reflect on our employers or funders. Some of the research we are discussing has been partially funded by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC).

Overview

- ▶ **Background on septic systems and management**
- ▶ **Research findings**
- ▶ **Conclusions and policy recommendations**



Background: Septic Systems

- Onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS)
- About 25% of US households use a septic system (US EPA)
- Management is complex



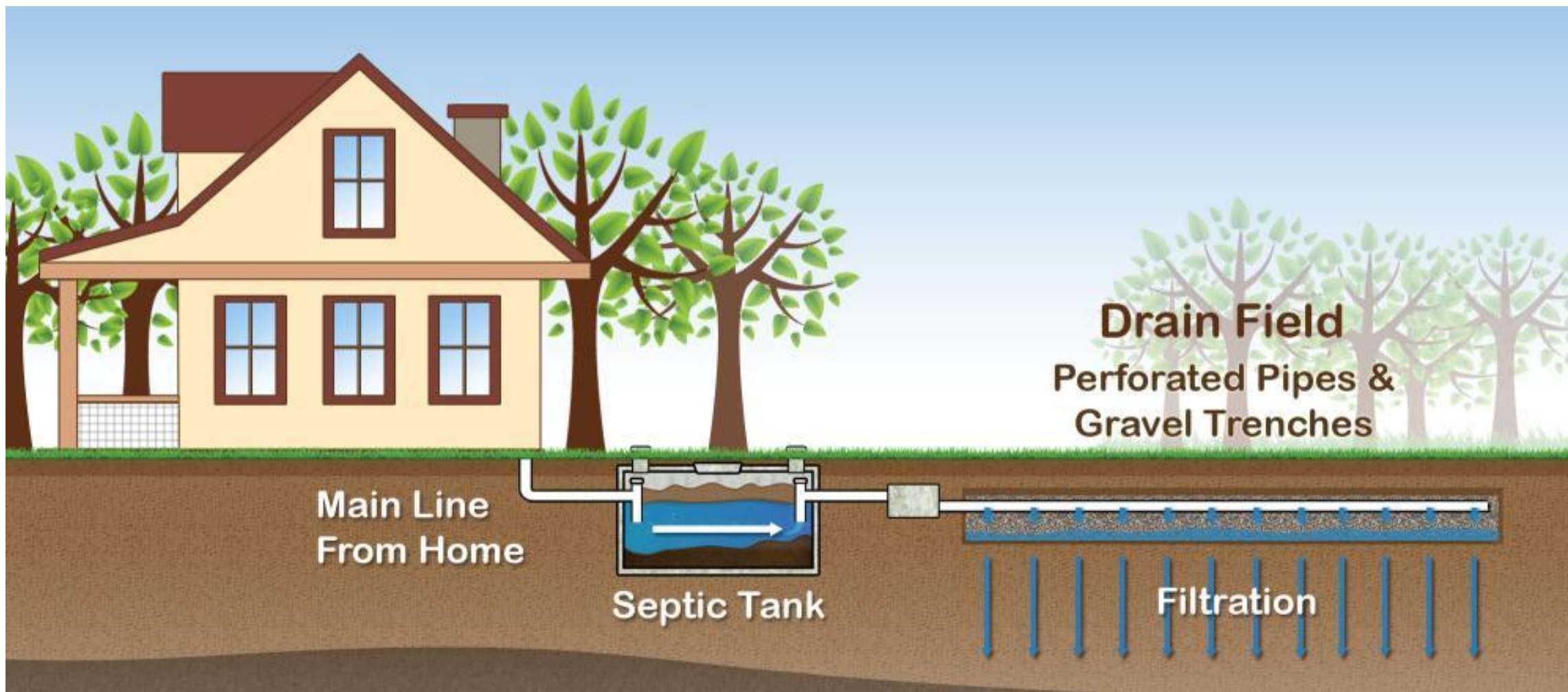
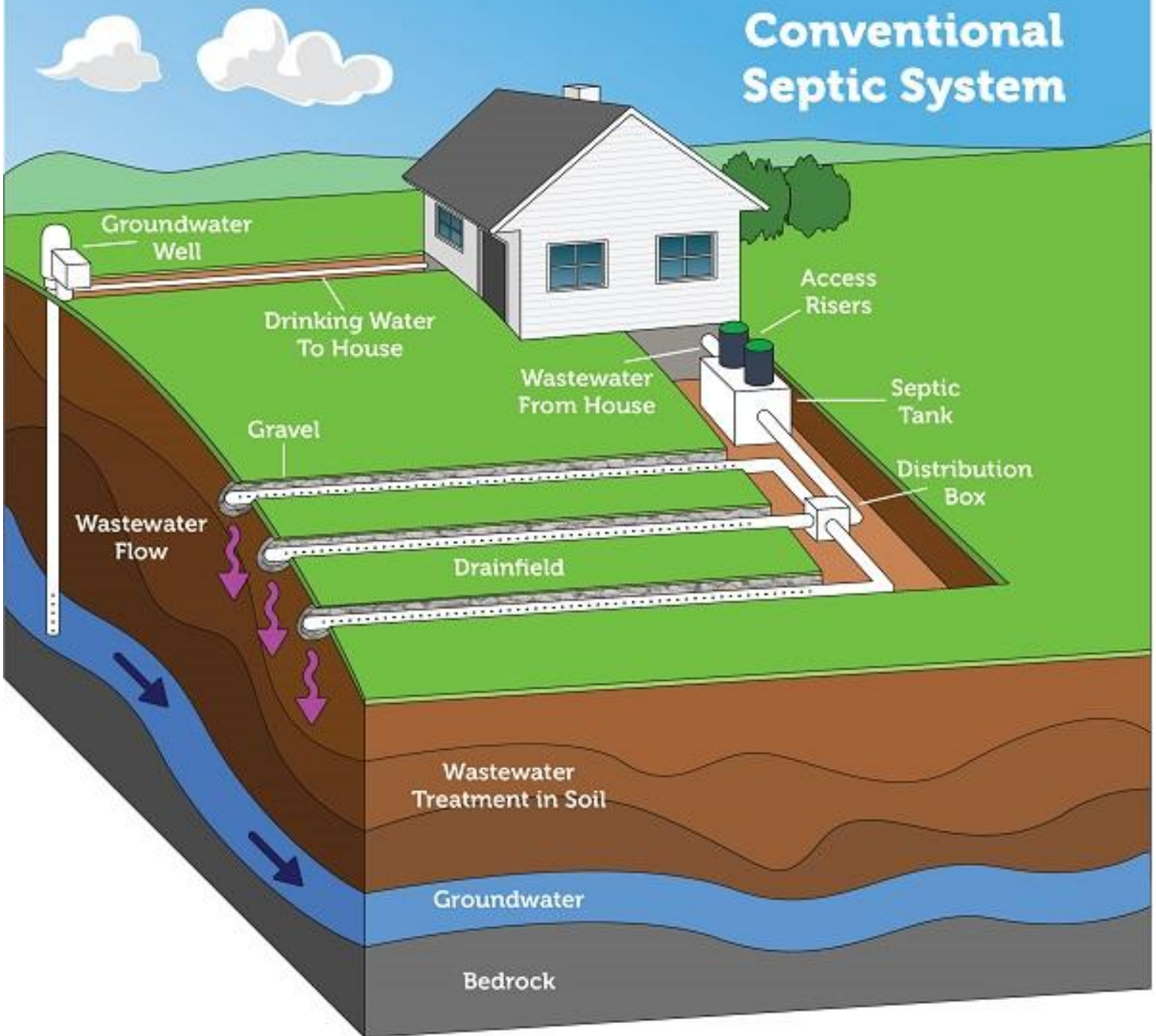


Image: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Conventional Septic System



Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.

Regulatory Landscape

- ▶ Many levels of government involved
- ▶ Some states have developed septic system policies and programs (Mezzacapo 2019)
 - ▶ (e.g. NY, RI, MD, MA, OH, DE, NJ)
- ▶ Multiple actors involved
 - ▶ (e.g. Public officials, program managers, septic pumpers/haulers, engineers, etc.)

Still, septic system policies and enforcement vary locally



“Out of sight, out of mind”

*“It’s very easy to lose track of things,
and it’s very common that people do.”*

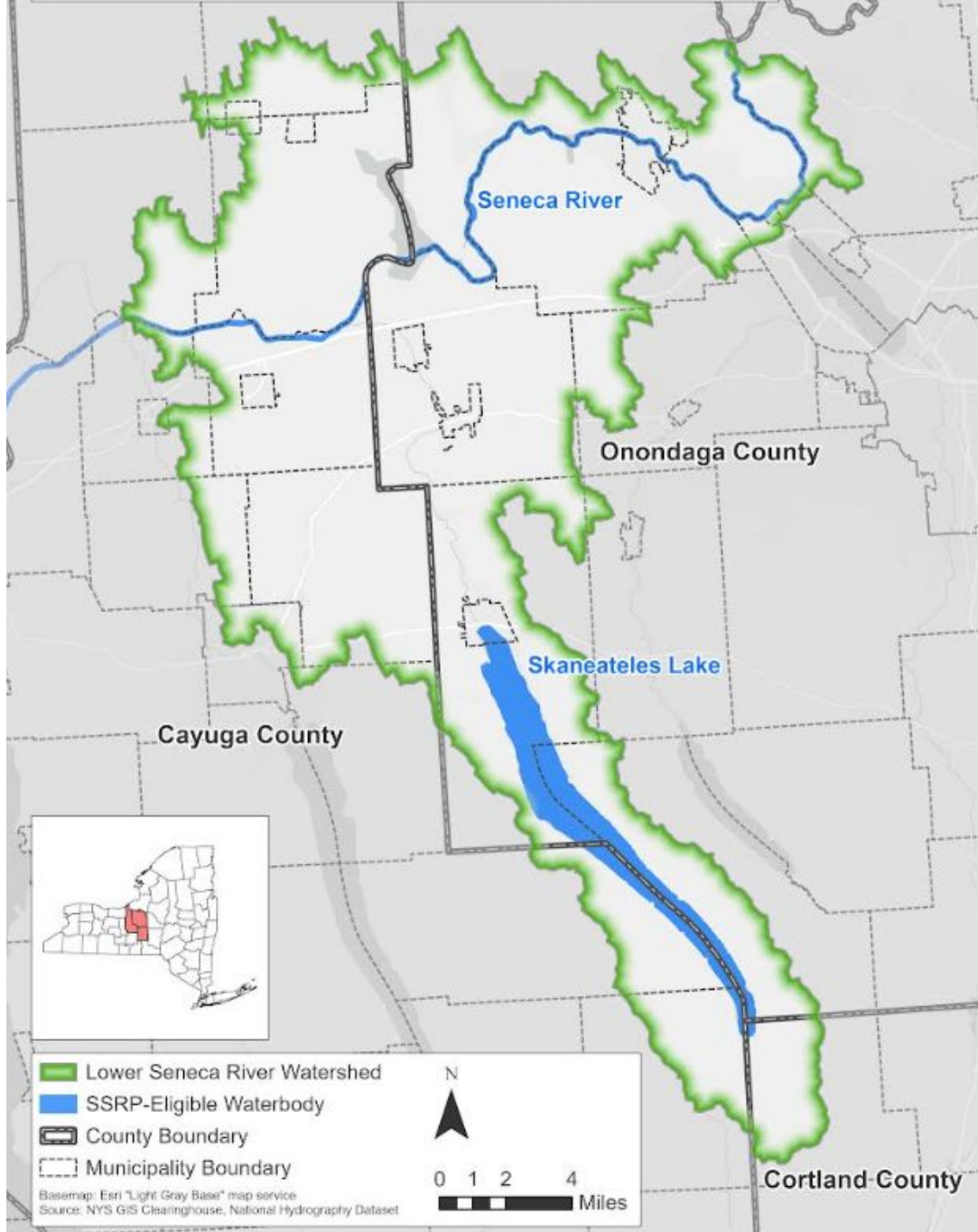


Dewey Northrup, Northrup Septic Service

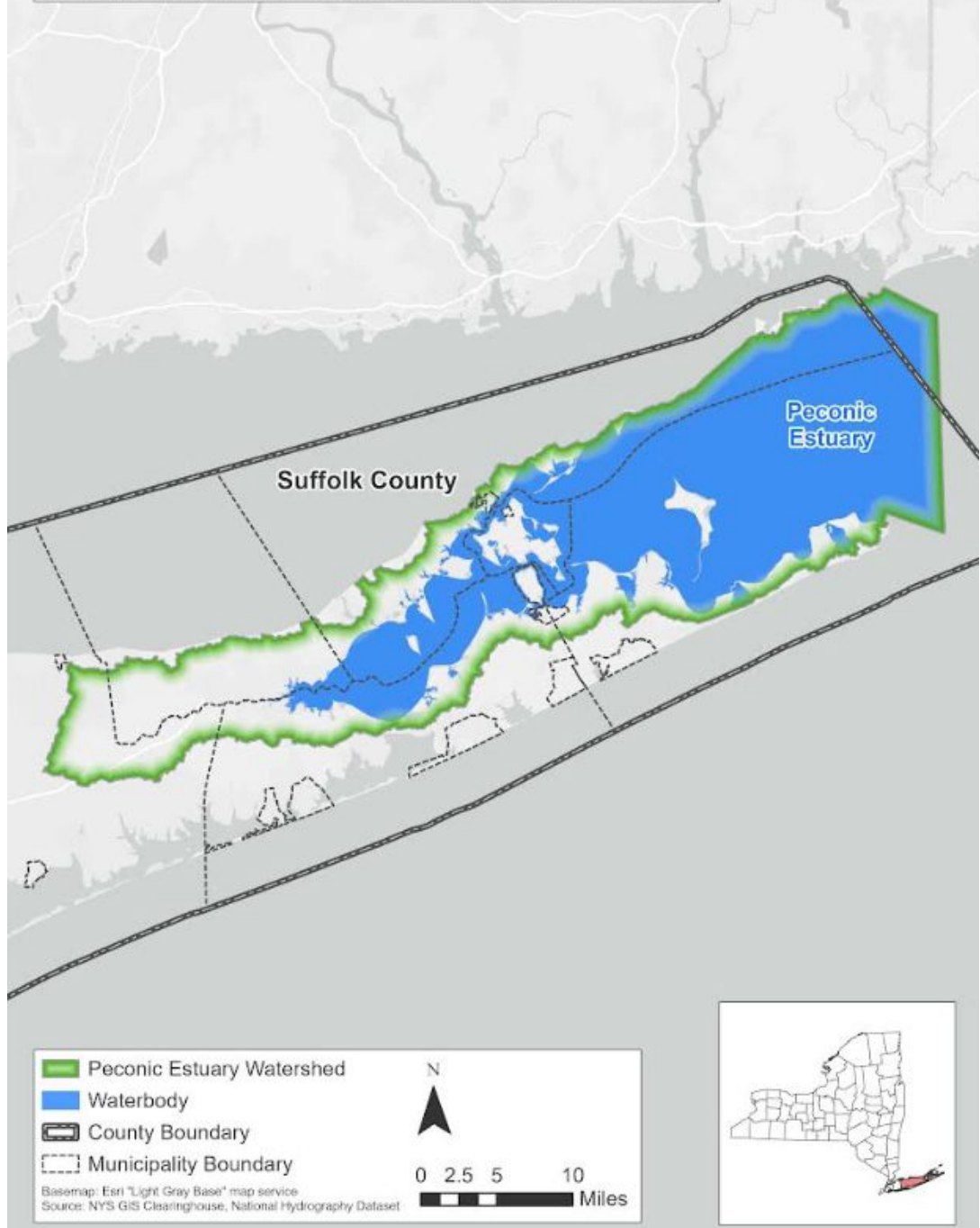
Research Project Objectives

1. Investigate policies and programs related to the installation and maintenance of septic systems
2. Gather data to understand community knowledge and perceptions of septic system management and available programs
3. Formulate recommendations for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) on how to improve septic system management within the project's study areas

Study Area 1: Lower Seneca River Watershed



Study Area 2: Peconic Estuary Watershed

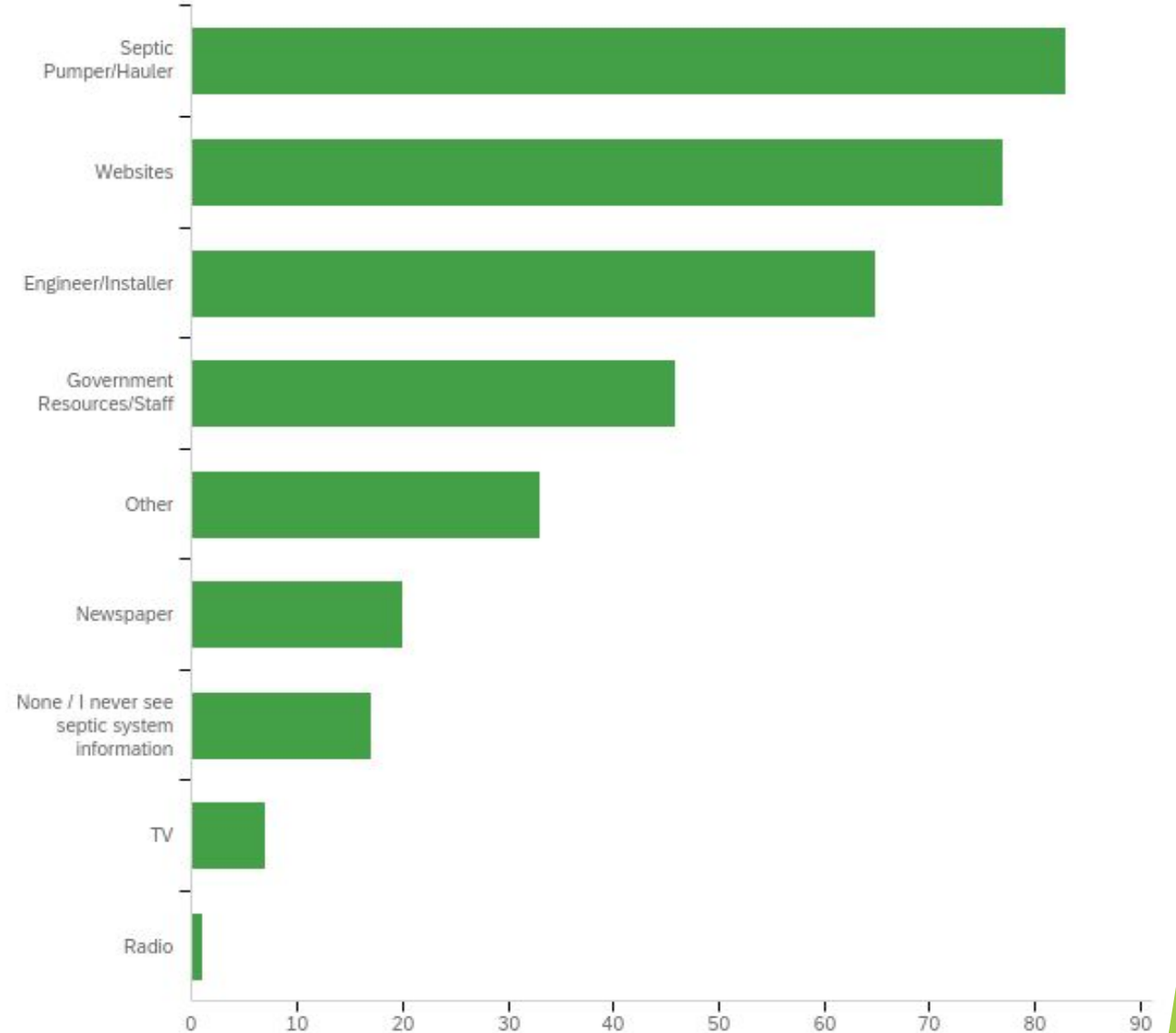




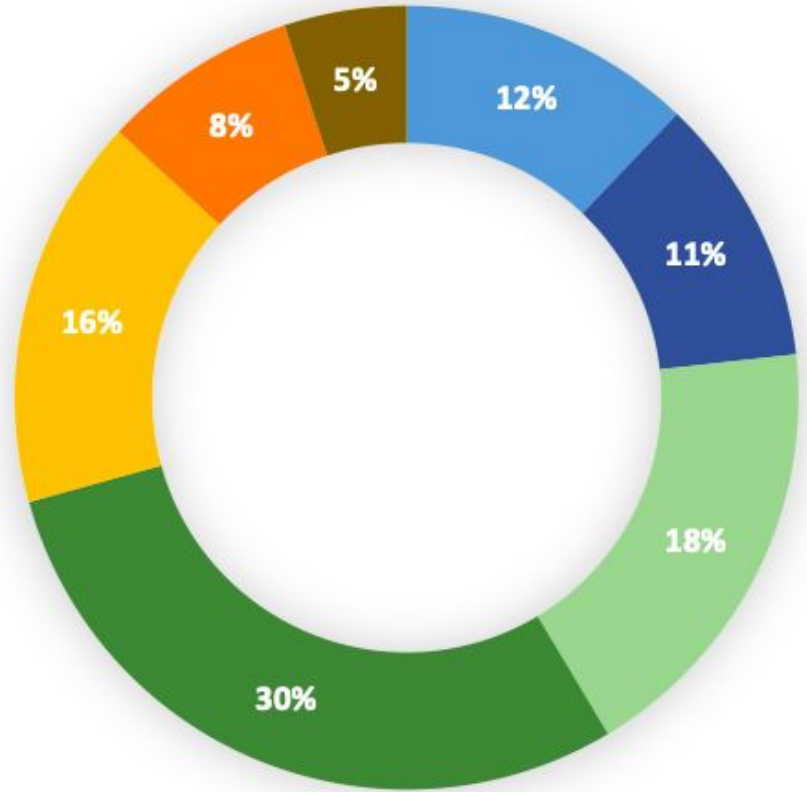
Survey Results

Where do you get information on septic systems?

- ▶ Septic pumpers, websites, and installers are the top 3 ways people learn about septic system maintenance, followed by government resources/staff.
- ▶ Most respondents who checked 'Other' wrote that they learned about septic systems from lived experiences as a septic owner or from neighbors and family.

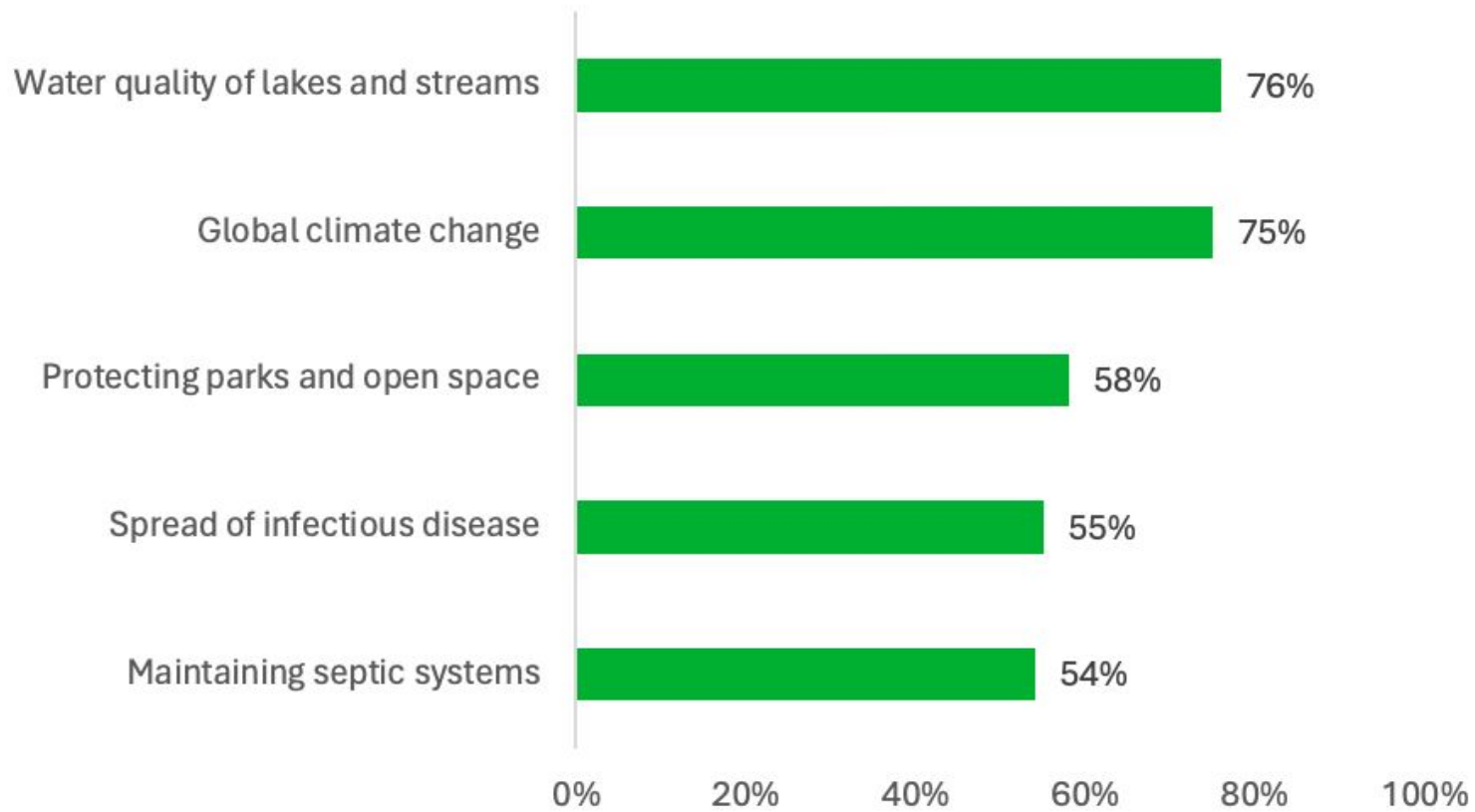


Septic System Age



- <5 years old
- 6-10 years old
- 11-20 years old
- 21-30 years old
- 30+ years old
- Don't know / not sure
- Other

Percentage of respondents labeling each issue as 'Extremely important'



Importance of septic system maintenance by maintenance frequency (n= 178)

| | <1 year | 1-2 years | 3-5 years | 6-10 years | >10 years | Never | Other | Don't know |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|------------|
| Extremely important | 4 | 18 | 47 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 7 |
| Very important | 1 | 13 | 20 | 14 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Moderately important | 0 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Slightly important | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Not at all important | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Management conclusions & recommendations

- ▶ More conversations
 - ▶ Overall, we heard that people “want to do the right thing”
- ▶ Technology-forcing policies
- ▶ Watershed-scale approach
- ▶ Statewide inventory of septic systems
 - ▶ Coordination with local organizations, building relationships

Issue framing conclusions & recommendations

- ▶ Issue framing helps to identify:
 - ▶ the various ways people think about & use these infrastructures
 - ▶ what motivates people to maintain them
- ▶ Including social factors and qualitative data is valuable for the future of natural resources management

How can policymakers frame issues to appeal to different narratives?

Final conclusions

- ▶ Onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) management is dynamic & currently evolving
- ▶ Both social and economic drivers are crucial to understanding acceptance of OWTS policies




Thank you!



Article

Beneath the Surface: Understanding Septic System Management in New York State Watersheds

Sharon Moran ^{1,*}  and Mackenzie Gregg ²

Cazenovia Lake, NY

References

Allen, M., & Allen, M. (2016). Understanding pro-environmental behavior: Models and messages. *Strategic Communication for Sustainable Organizations: Theory and Practice*, 105-137.

Leong, C. (2021). Narratives and water: A bibliometric review. *Global environmental change*, 68, 102267.

Mankad, A., & Tapsuwan, S. (2011). Review of socio-economic drivers of community acceptance and adoption of decentralised water systems. *Journal of environmental management*, 92(3), 380-391. (Accessed January 2024).

McKenzie-Mohr, D., & Smith, W. (2009). Fostering sustainable behavior: Community-based social marketing. *CBSM*.

Mezzacapo, M. (2019). A multi-state regulation and policy survey of onsite wastewater treatment system upgrade programs.

US EPA. (n.d.). About Septic Systems.

<https://www.epa.gov/septic/about-septic-systems#:~:text=More%20than%20one%20in%20five,sytems%20to%20treat%20their%20wastewater>. (Accessed April 2024).

Protecting Natural Resources Through Septic Inspection Programs

Ontario County Soil & Water
Conservation District



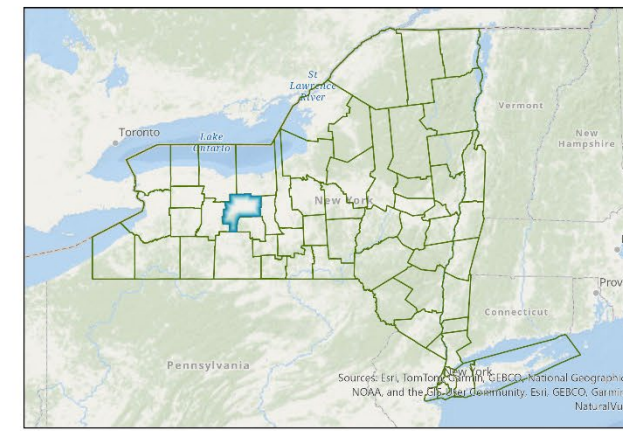
www.ontariocountyswcd.gov

What is a Soil & Water Conservation District?

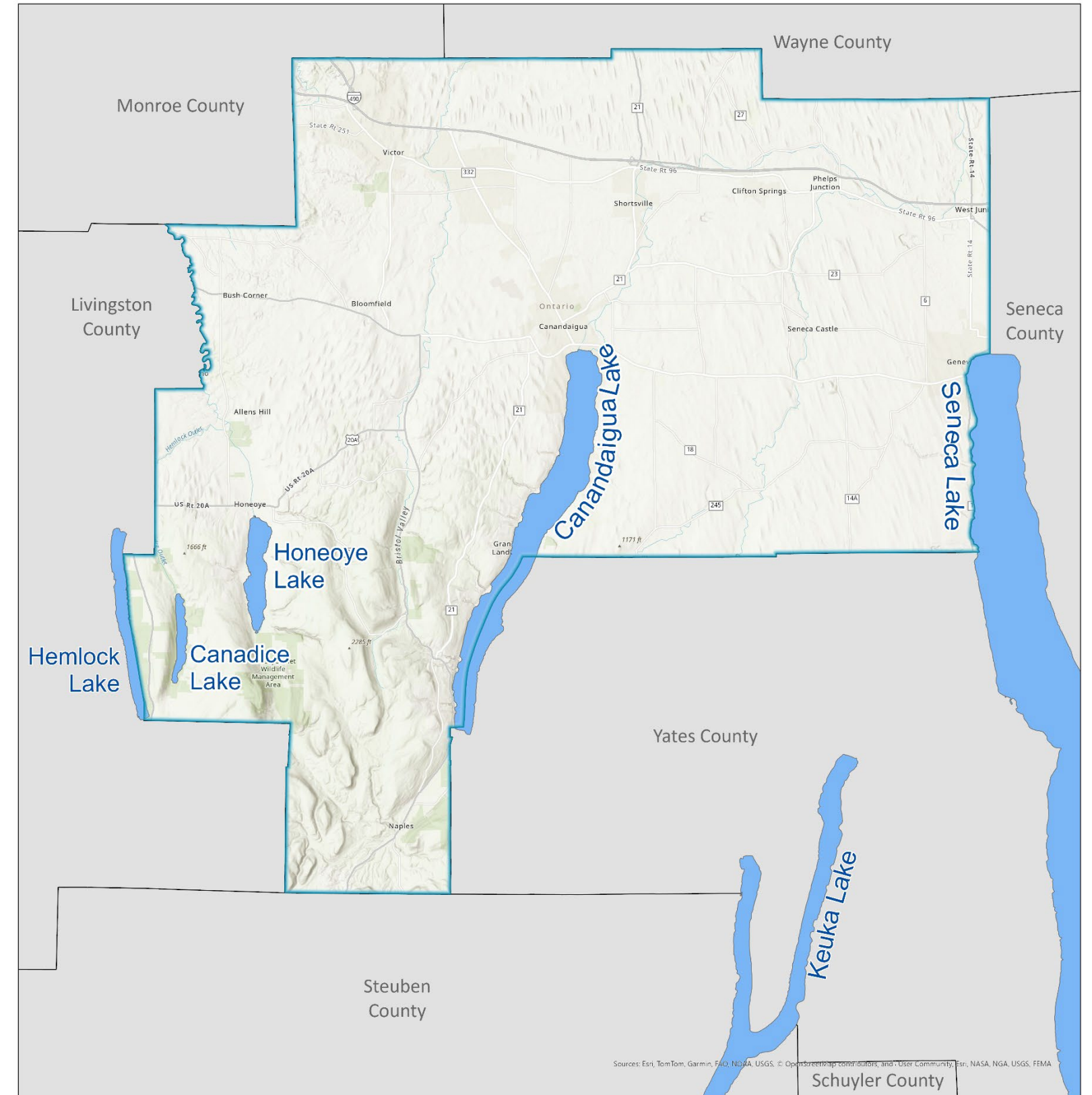
Ontario SWCD is a municipal sub-division established by Ontario County in 1940.

We provide technical assistance and education to the residents of Ontario County to ensure the wise use of soil, water, and other natural resources.

SWCDs have NO regulatory powers, but work collaboratively with municipalities, agencies, and individuals to accomplish these goals.



Finger Lakes in Ontario County New York



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FIA, NOAA, USGS, © Department of Geographic Information Systems, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA

Why is a Septic* Inspection Important?

*Onsite Wastewater Treatment System



- Protecting Human Health
- Preventing System Failures
- Safeguarding the Environment
- Maintaining Compliance



Why is a Septic Inspection Important?



Health officials close Canandaigua Lake swimming areas

By MIKE HIBBARD mhibbard@ftimes.com Jul 13, 2023 Updated Aug 17, 2024



Beer

CANANDAIGUA — Three Canandaigua Lake swimming beaches have been closed due to elevated levels of bacteria — the result of Sunday's torrential rain.

Ontario County Public Health officials said the swimming areas of Kershaw Park in Canandaigua, Deep Run Park in Gorham, and Onanda Park in Canandaigua were closed after laboratory testing showed the bacteria. They will remain closed until testing confirms the water is safe.

Mary Beer, the county's director of public health, said all public beaches in the county are tested regularly.

Heavy rains and flooding washed contaminated stormwater into the lake. Testing on Tuesday showed levels of E. coli and other coliform



Who Creates Inspection Requirements And Who Enforces

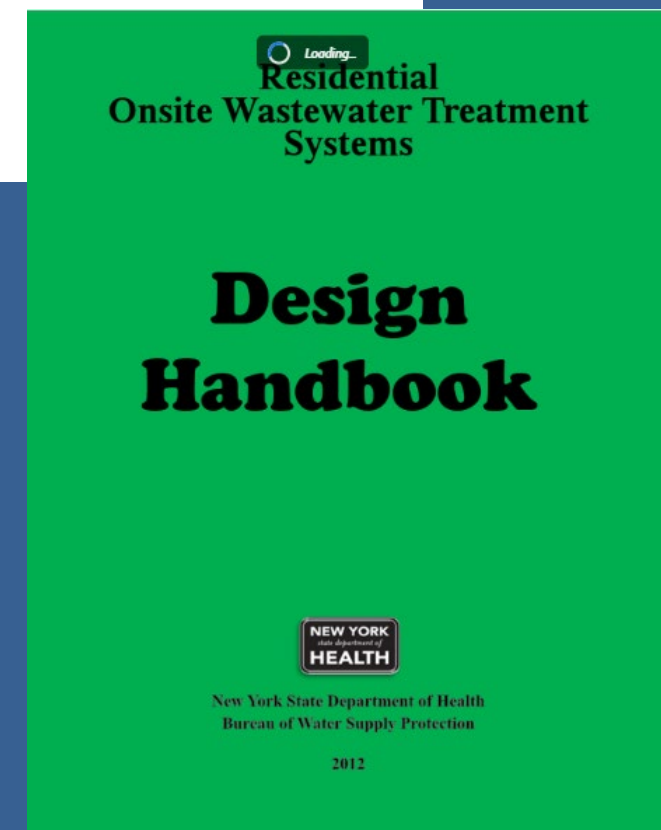
NYS DOH Public Health Law,
Section 201(1)(I)

Appendix 75-A - Wastewater
Treatment Standards - Residential
Onsite Systems

- Appendix 75-A.1 - Introduction
- Appendix 75-A.2 - Regulation by other agencies
- Appendix 75-A.3 - Sewage flows
- Appendix 75-A.4 - Soil and site appraisal
- Appendix 75-A.5 - House or building sewer
- Appendix 75-A.6 - Septic tanks and Enhanced Treatment Units
- Appendix 75-A.7 - Distribution devices
- Appendix 75-A.8 - Conventional subsurface treatment systems
- Appendix 75-A.9 - Alternative subsurface treatment systems
- Appendix 75-A.10 - Other systems
- Appendix 75-A.11 - Specific Waivers

County Environmental Health or Planning Departments
Municipal Local Law* enforced by Town CEOs

*Check out Ontario County Town of Geneva, Town of Canandaigua, Town of Farmington and Town of South Bristol Local Laws for examples



Establishing Local Laws

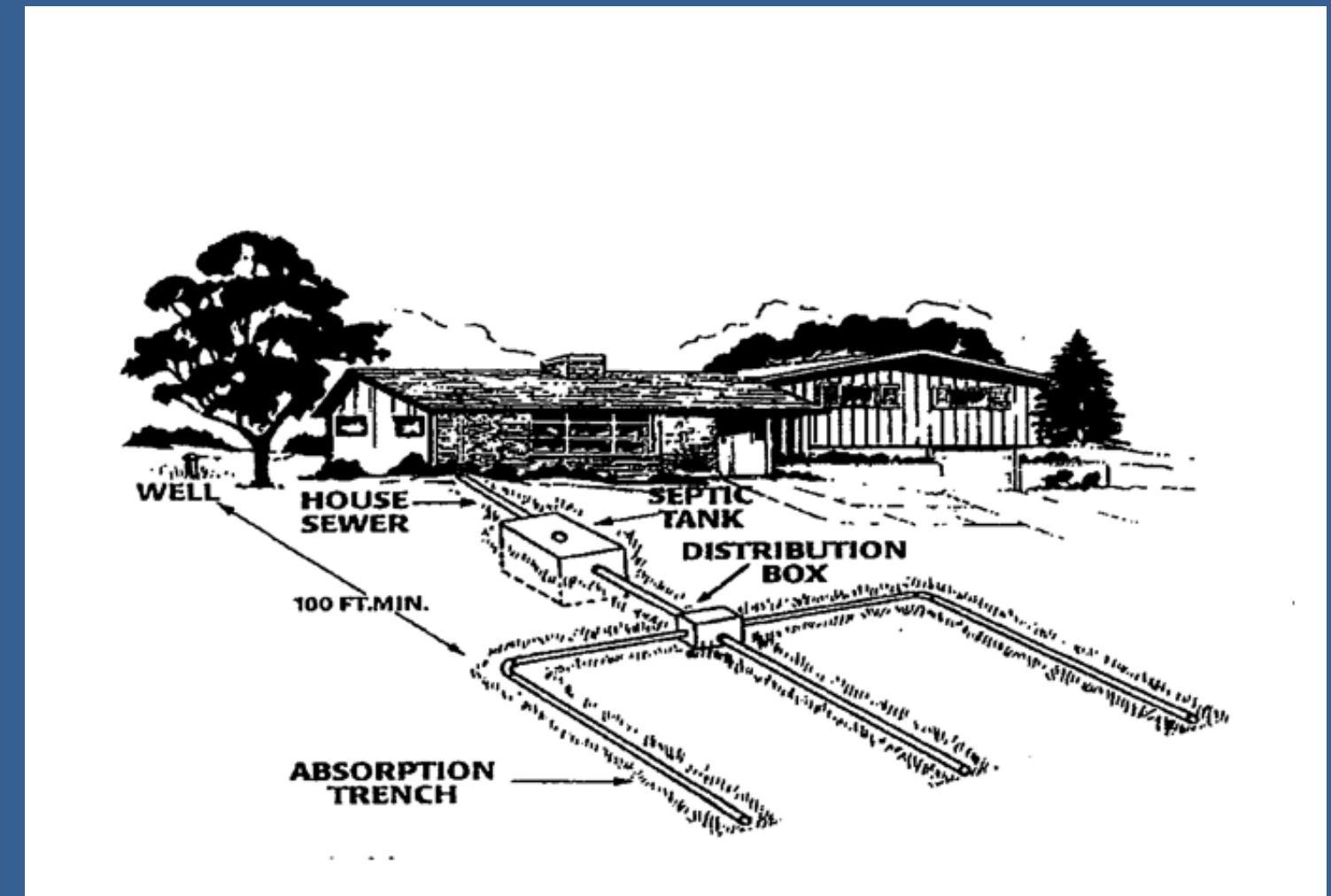
No NYS DOH Standard for Inspections

Municipal Local Law – requiring Inspections of On-site Treatment Systems

Begins with Town Board

NYS Department of State must approve changes to Local Laws

Who is enforcing, who is inspecting, when are inspections etc.



When Do We Perform Inspections



Property Deed
Transfer/Change of Use



Building or System
Expansion



5 Year Inspections



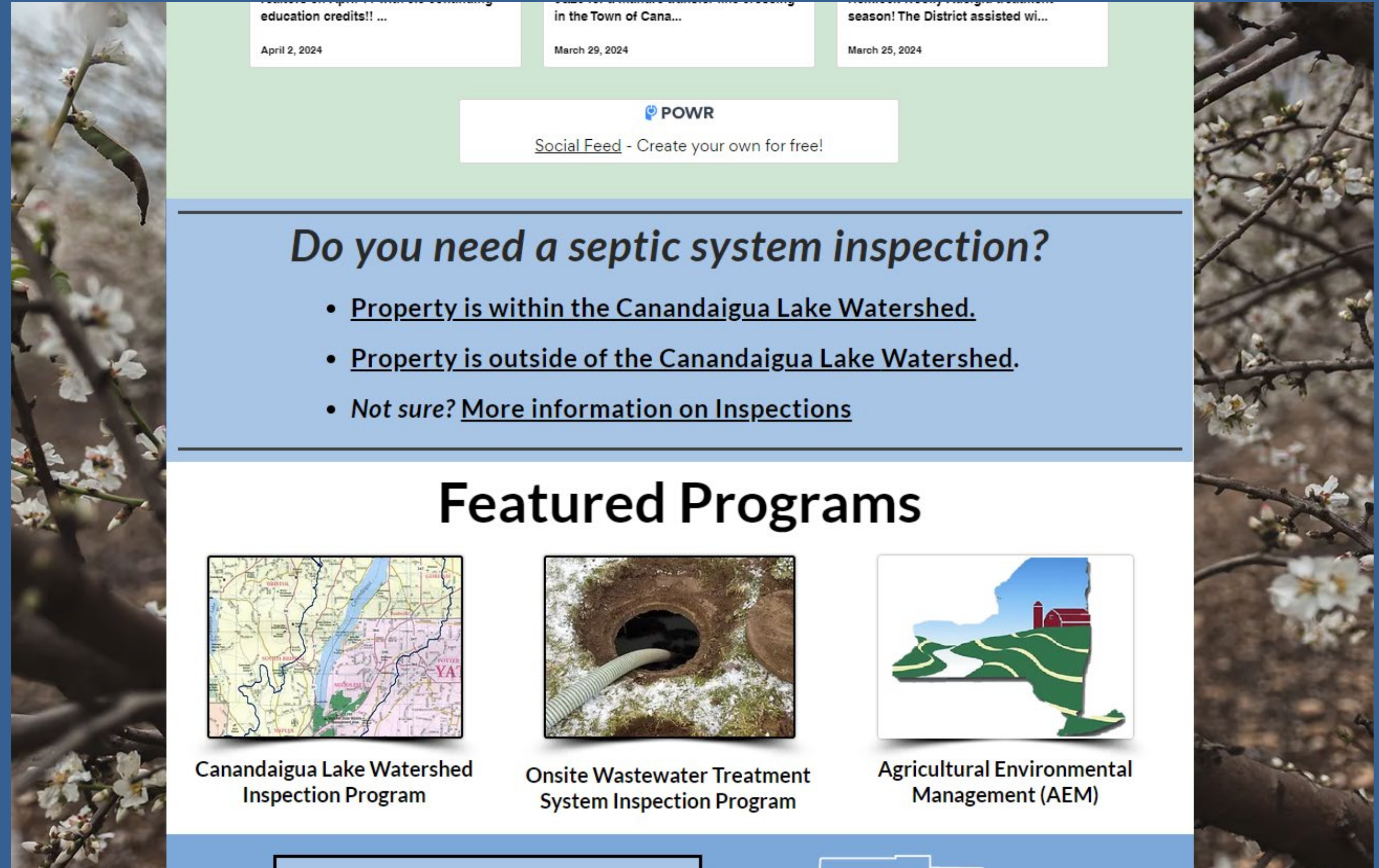
Short Term Rentals

Who Performs Inspections

It Can Be Complicated...

Local Law determines who can provide an inspection and how reports are distributed

- Soil & Water Conservation District
- Professional (ex. Registered Professional Engineer)
- Town Code Enforcement Officer
- Registered Onsite Treatment Network Personnel



The image shows a screenshot of a social media feed at the top with three posts from April 2, 2024, and March 29 and 25, 2024. Below the feed is a white box with the POWR logo and the text "Social Feed - Create your own for free!". The main content is a blue box with the heading "Do you need a septic system inspection?" and three bullet points: "Property is within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed.", "Property is outside of the Canandaigua Lake Watershed.", and "Not sure? More information on Inspections". Below this is a white box titled "Featured Programs" with three columns: "Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspection Program" with a map, "Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Inspection Program" with a photo of a pipe, and "Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM)" with a farm icon.



ONTARIO COUNTY

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
480 North Main – Canandaigua – New York – 14424
585-396-1450 ontswcd.com

* Septic Inspections *

Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Inspections Prior To Any Deed Transfer 2026

Towns that require this office (the sole provider) for all inspections under their Local Law
Farmington (including Pumpkin Hook and all septic tank or distribution box replacements)
Geneva (including all lakefront rentals)
South Bristol (only outside the Canandaigua Lake Watershed but including all rentals)
West Bloomfield (including Ionia and parts of 'Honeoye Falls')

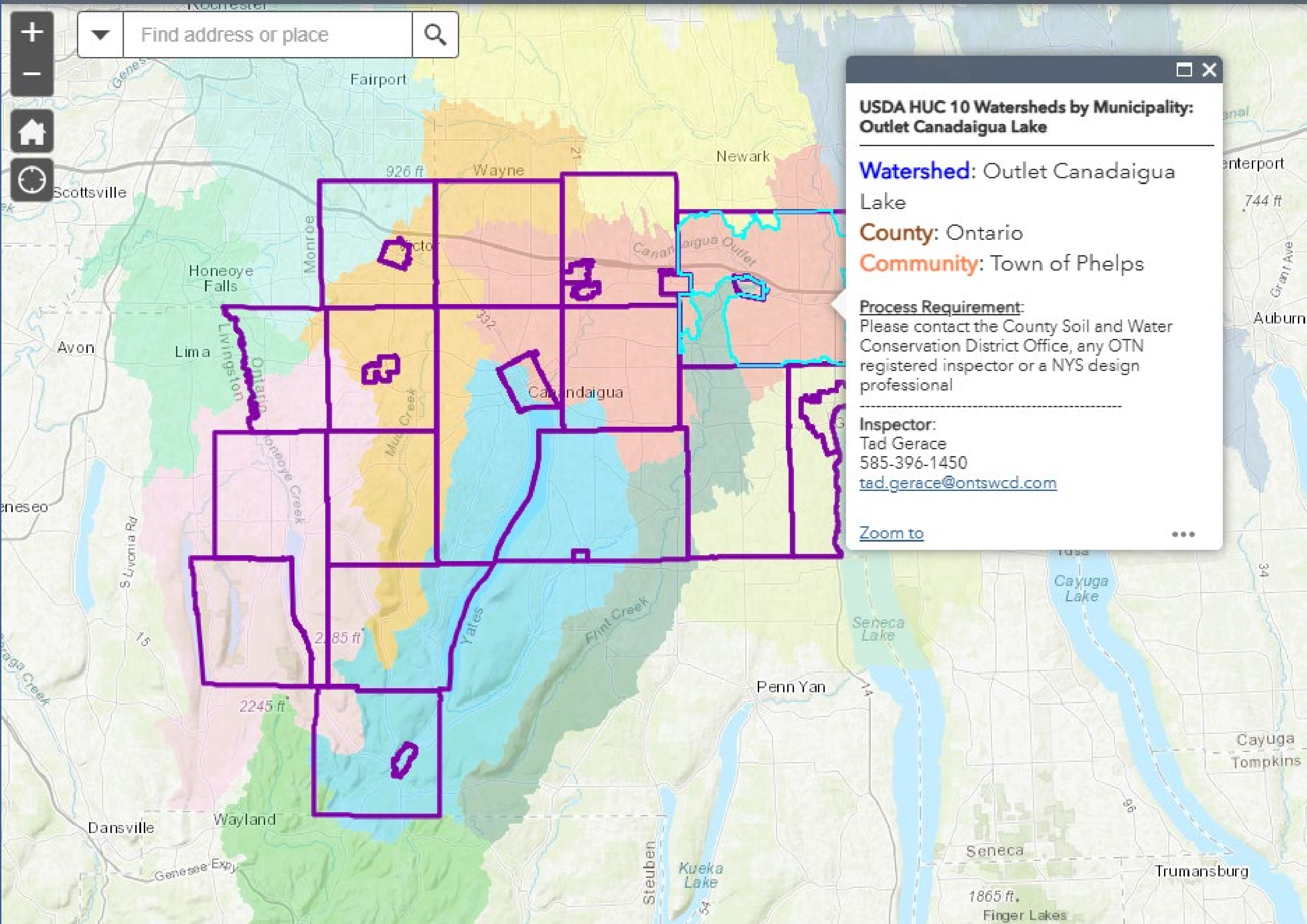
Towns that require this office, the code enforcement officer, health officer, watershed inspector, any NYS design professional or architect but only if required by a financial institution, attorney or a party to the conveyance
East Bloomfield 585-657-5455
Hopewell 585-394-3850 x4

Towns that use this office, any OTN registered inspector or a NYS design professional
Canandaigua 585-394-1120
Phelps 1-315-548-2971
Richmond (including parts of Honeoye) 585-229-5757

Towns that use this office, certain inspectors or the Code Enforcement Officer
Bristol 585-229-2440

Call the Code Enforcement Officer
Canadice 585-367-2050 3#
Gorham 585-526-5479
Manchester 1-315-462-6224 x107 (including Port Gibson)
Naples 585-374-2111
Seneca 585-526-5251 x31 (including Stanley)
Victor 585-742-5035 (including Fishers)

Tad Gerace – Conservation District Technician/OTN Registered Inspector
tad.gerace@ontswcd.com
<https://www.ontswcd.com/septic-system-programs>



Find address or place

Map navigation controls: zoom in (+), zoom out (-), home, and refresh.

**USDA HUC 10 Watersheds by Municipality:
Outlet Canadaigua Lake**

Watershed: Outlet Canadaigua Lake
County: Ontario
Community: Town of Phelps

Process Requirement:
 Please contact the County Soil and Water Conservation District Office, any OTN registered inspector or a NYS design professional

Inspector:
 Tad Gerace
 585-396-1450
tad.gerace@ontswcd.com

[Zoom to](#) ⋮

NY Onsite Wastewater Treatment Training Network (OTN)

Training Courses on:
Soil Analysis
Inspection
Installation
Foundations



<https://otnny.org>



NY-OTN Mission:

To Enhance New York State's Utilization of Modern Onsite and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Technologies for the protection of Water Quality and Public Health through Training to Industry Professionals, Policy Makers and Property Owners





Uniform Procedures Program Onsite-Wastewater Treatment System Inspections

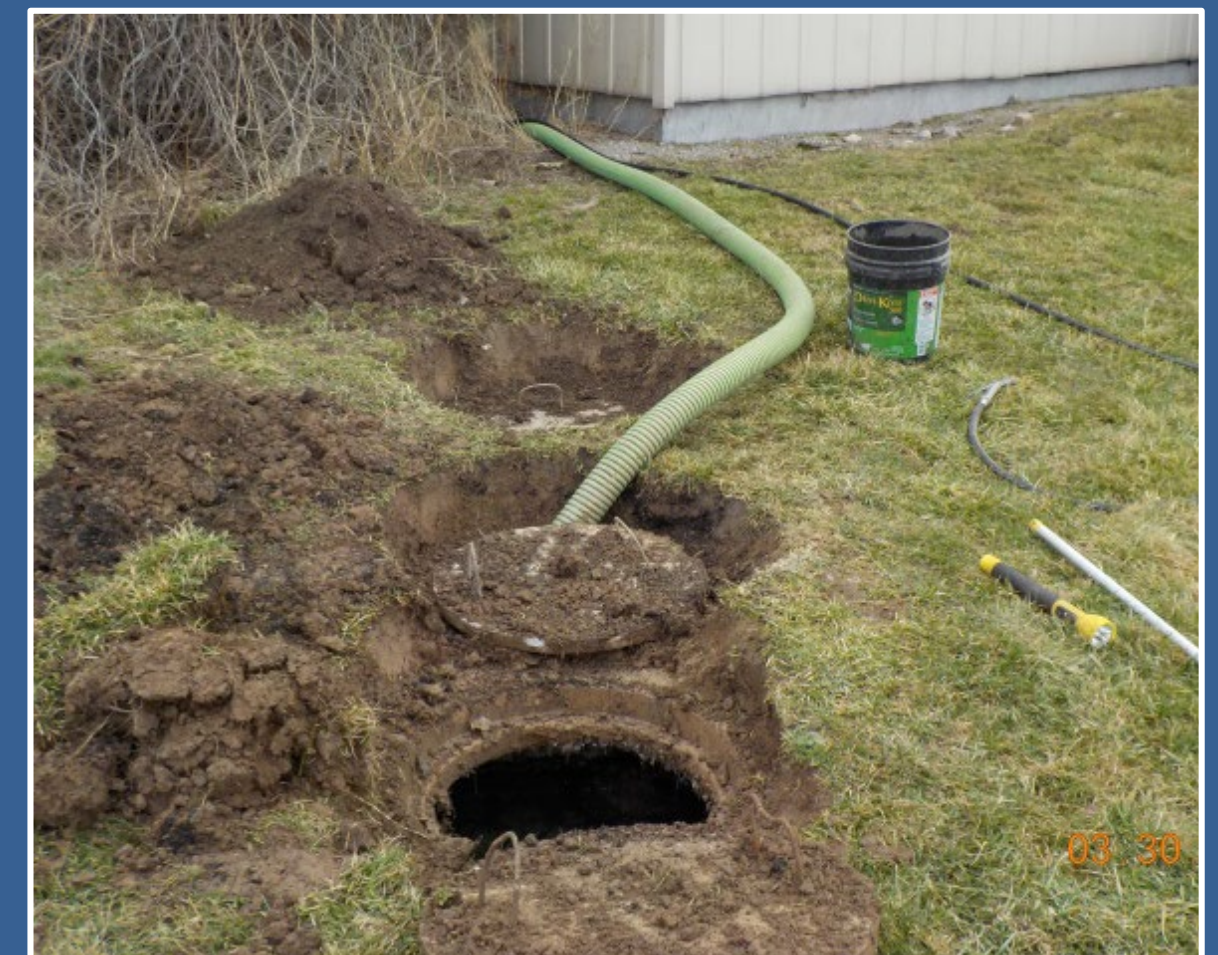


Throughout Ontario County
Working to ensure Inspections are:

- Consistent
- Accurate
- Reported
- Following Code

Services

- Soil Investigation
- Inspection of New & Existing Systems
 - Property Deed Transfer
 - Rental Properties
- Deep Hole Percolation Tests
- NYS Onsite Training Network





Uniform Procedures Program Onsite-Wastewater Treatment System Inspections

These are NOT a self sustaining programs and require funding from additional sources.

Funding for the Program:

- NYS Agriculture & Markets Funding
- Ontario County Appropriation
- Fees from Inspections/Reviews

We review our fee schedule and current commercial providers fee to ensure we are competitively priced.



ONTARIO COUNTY

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
480 North Main – Canandaigua – New York – 14424
585-396-1450 ontswcd.com

2026 FEE SCHEDULE

UNIFORM PROCEDURES PROGRAM
ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

EXISTING SYSTEM INSPECTION:

- Deed transfer/Real property...per system.
Payment to be submitted prior to release of inspection report..... **\$225**

** If feasible, additional fee of **\$150** per system component if inspector must hand dig.**

Ontario County SWCD reserves the right to enact a **\$50.00** cancellation fee if the client cancels the scheduled inspection within one week of an appointment without attempting to re-schedule.

NEW CONSTRUCTION / EXISTING SYSTEM:

- Site Visit/Re-Inspection.
Payment to be submitted prior to release of report..... **\$100**
- Final Inspection without a previous inspection.
Payment to be submitted prior to release of findings..... **\$200**

ENGINEERED DESIGN REVIEW:

- Review and comment(s) of conventional repair/replacement system*
Payment to be submitted prior to release of comment(s) **\$150**
** New alternative systems require review by the New York State Department of Health*

SOIL INVESTIGATION:

- Observe/inspect deep hole (\$250) and percolation test (\$250) per site.
Payment to be submitted prior to release of report* **\$500**
** As of January 1, 2004, the New York State Education Department with the New York State Department of Health require, under the New York State Education Law, all systems receive a review and a signed/stamped design by a licensed design professional.*

Checks payable to: **ONTARIO COUNTY SWCD**

Send to: Ontario County SWCD
480 North Main Street
Canandaigua NY 14424-1049

Unauthorized use or alteration of this form is prohibited.



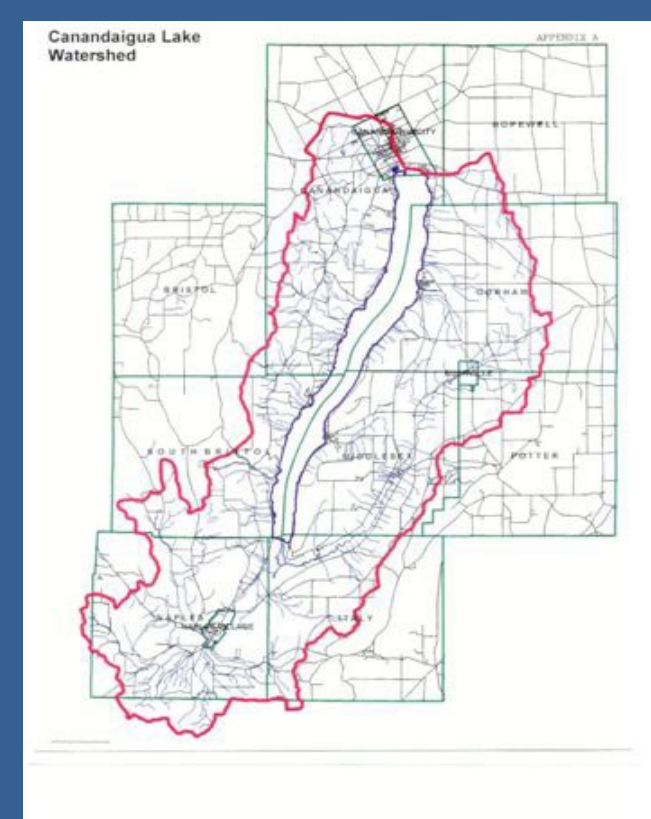
Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspection Program

The commission consist of the purveyors that draw public drinking water from the lake:

City of Canandaigua
Village of Rushville
Village of Palmyra
Village of Newark
Town of Gorham

Responsible for enforcing New York State Department of Health
law Specific to The Canandaigua Lake Watershed:
10 NYCRR Section 132.1

Canandaigua Lake Watershed Commission is responsible for
appointing a Watershed Inspector to enforce section 132.1



ARTICLE 3 General Regulations, Design Standards and Requirements

§ 120-6. General Regulations

- A. It shall be unlawful to install, construct, alter, replace, enlarge, extend, or otherwise modify any on-site wastewater treatment system unless an on-site wastewater treatment system permit is issued by the authority having jurisdiction, except as specifically exempted in § 120-8.
- B. It shall be unlawful to change the use of real property or any building thereon, convey real property, expand a building or dwelling by increasing the number of bedrooms and/or bedroom equivalents, or increase the building or dwelling square footage by greater than twenty-five (25) percent of the square footage, or alter a building or dwelling such that the work area exceeds 50 percent of the aggregate area of the existing building without an inspection of the existing on-site wastewater treatment system by a Certified Inspector, pursuant to Article 4 of this law.
- C. It shall be a violation of this law to use any on-site wastewater treatment system that is in failure.
- D. On-site wastewater treatment systems with the absorption area located within 200 feet of Canandaigua Lake shall also comply with § 120-9 - Requirements of Substandard Systems.
- E. There shall be no activities or conditions permitted which would interfere with the proper operation of on-site wastewater treatment systems. It is specifically prohibited to construct or place anything that would impact the absorption area including but not limited to: buildings, structures, paving, trees or shrubs, fill, the parking or crossing by vehicles, above ground pools, driveways or parking areas.
- F. It shall be unlawful to discharge anything but sewage into an on-site wastewater treatment system. Surface and subsurface water including roof, cellar, foundation and storm drainage shall not be discharged into the on-site wastewater treatment system and shall be disposed of so as to in no way affect the proper functioning of the system.
- G. All new on-site wastewater treatment systems or modifications to existing on-site wastewater treatment systems shall be designed by a Design Professional. The Design Professional shall have the right to contract with the Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District through its Uniform Inspection Procedures Program for site and soil appraisals.



Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspection Program

- Inspect septic and alternative systems at the time of property deed transfer, shoreline properties, etc.
- Aid Local municipalities with the implementation of the local wastewater treatment law.
- Consult for new construction and repairs of systems.
- Review building plans for suitability of wastewater treatment.
- Conduct/observe deep hole and percolation tests for every wastewater system.



OTN Inspections Protocol

The OTN has developed a standardized inspection procedure and reporting format for the inspection of existing residential onsite wastewater treatment systems.

The standardized inspection procedure and reporting format are not part of state regulation.

The use of a standard protocol protects both inspector and client and municipality



OTN SYSTEM INSPECTION INFORMATION REQUEST

Individual Residential Wastewater Treatment System

(Please type or print)

Property and Owner Identification (Attach property survey/tax parcel map if possible)

Tax Parcel Identification Number _____ Town: _____

Property Address _____

Property Owner _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Inspection Request Information

Inspection requested by: _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Requested date of inspection (give two or three) _____

Purpose of request: property transfer agency request malfunction

other (please describe) _____

Inspection fee to be paid by: _____

Payment is due before report is released

Household Information

Owner-occupied or Rental

Full-time or Seasonal.....If seasonal, # weeks _____

Last know date of occupancy: _____ Number of occupants: _____

Age of home: _____ Total square footage: _____

of bedrooms: _____ # of bathrooms: _____ Water-saving fixtures? Yes No

Home, business or hobby? (e.g. daycare, photography, taxidermy, salon): Yes No

Type _____

Regularly used medications? (e.g. chemotherapy, dialysis): Yes No

Are there any wells on the property? _____ How many? _____

Household fresh water source: Public Wells(s) Spring(s) Other

List all public or private buried utilities or structures on the property: (gas, electric, phone, etc.) _____

Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (s)

How many systems are on the property? _____

Year system(s) installed: Tank _____ Leach system _____

Are all systems components wholly within the property boundaries? Yes No

Are system plans available? Yes No

Does the system(s) serve multiple properties? Yes No

If yes, describe _____

Maintenance

Service agreement? Yes No If yes, vender _____

Date of last inspection _____; N/A Date tank last pumped _____; N/A

Frequency of pumping _____; N/A

OTN SYSTEM INSPECTION INFORMATION REQUEST (CONT.)

List known repairs/replacements, with dates:

Table with 2 columns: Date, Type of Repair/Replacement

Operations

- System problems? Yes No
Sewage odors? Yes No
Direct surface discharge(s)? Yes No
Back-up of toilets? Yes No
Back-up of any other fixtures? (e.g. slow drains) Yes No
Seasonal ponding or breakout of leach field? Yes No

Statement of Acceptance of Conditions

I agree to:

- ensure that the septic tank(s), distribution box(es), and/or seepage pit(s), if any, will be uncovered prior to the requested inspection time;
- have a seepage hauler on site (to pump the tank after* the inspector arrives);
* Tank must be pumped in presence of inspector.
- have an authorized representative present at the site to provide access to home for inspection of interior plumbing;
- allow the inspector to verify information provided above, and to conduct an inspection of the indicated onsite wastewater treatment system(s), including all system components, and interior and exterior plumbing.

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided above is accurate.

I agree to be responsible for inspection fee payment.

Signature of property owner or authorized agent:

Please print name: _____

Affiliation: owner agent, _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments/Directions to property/etc. (optional)

Inspector

Name of Inspector Tad Gerace

Affiliation Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District

Address 480 North Main Street

Canandaigua NY 14424

Telephone Number (585) 396-1450 x21

Purpose of an Inspection

- Observe what system components are present
- Observe the apparent functioning of each component at time of inspection
- Document location of the system
- Share report with necessary parties



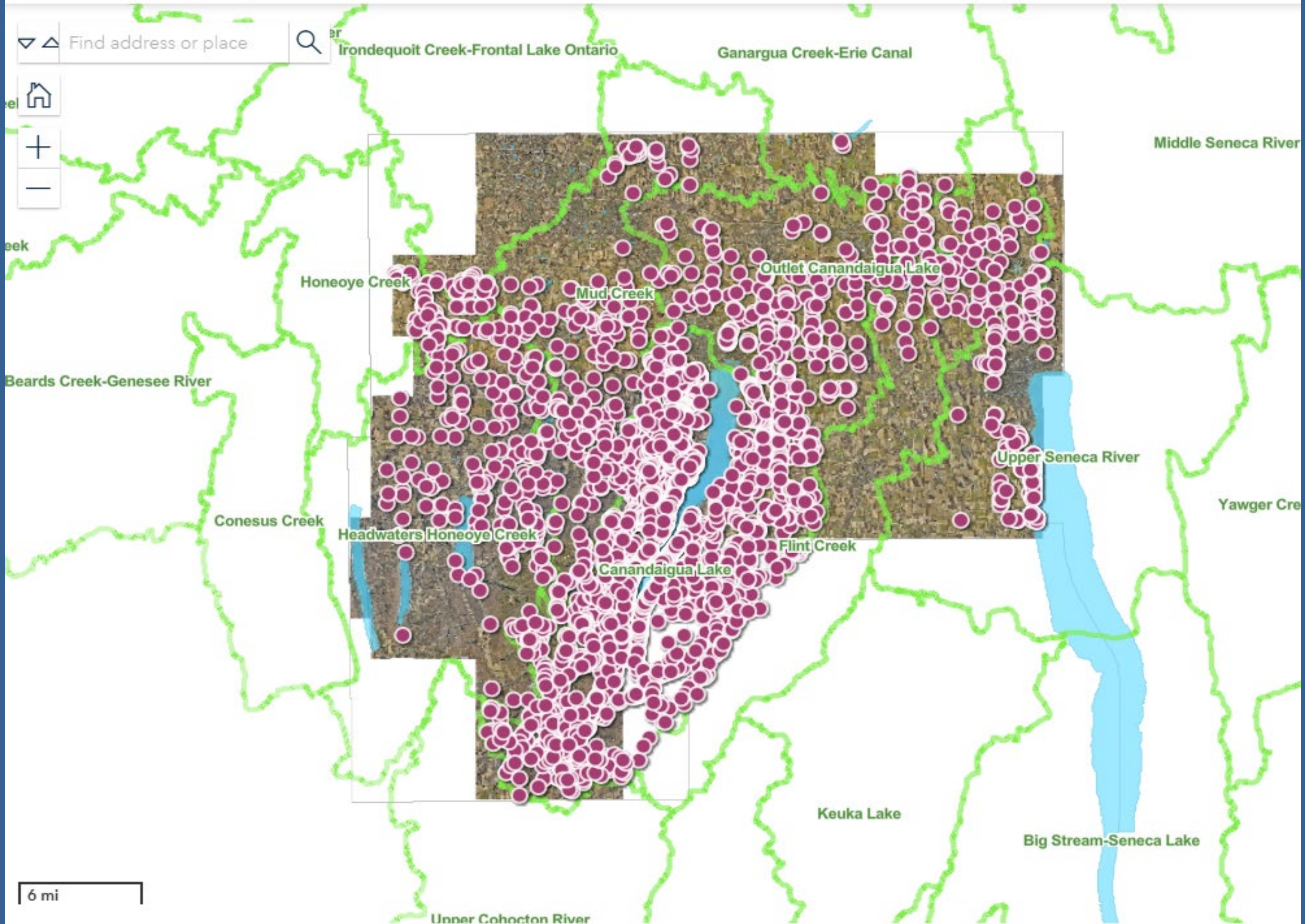
Limitations

Inspections will not provide:

- Designs
- A pass/fail grade
- Guarantees
- Solutions

Report facts only







Seneca Point Rd

Seneca Point Rd

5717 Seneca Point Rd

Seneca Point Rd

Applewood Dr

5703 Applewood Dr

5705 Applewood Dr

5707 A Applewood Dr

5709 Applewood Dr

5711 Applewood Dr

5713 Applewood Dr

5719 B Seneca Point Rd

5723 A Seneca Point Rd

5721 Seneca Point Rd

5725 Seneca Point Rd

5723 B Seneca Point Rd

5734 Seneca Point Rd

5731 Seneca Point Rd

5733 Seneca Point Rd

5735 Seneca Point Rd

5737 A Seneca Point Rd

5737 B Seneca Point Rd

5741 Seneca Point Rd

5739 Seneca Point Rd



ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER

OWTSIT



[EDIT LOCATION](#)

[ASSOCIATE PARCELS](#)

[MARKUP](#)



PROPERTY INFORMATION

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Parcel ID | 3246001680200001016000 | Owner | [REDACTED] |
| Address | 5709 Applewood Dr | Muni | Town of South Bristol |
| | | County | Ontario |

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Associated Parcels | Watershed |
| [REDACTED] | Canandaigua Lake |
| | Bldg Type |
| | Residential |
| | #Bdrms |
| | 6 |

GENERAL SYSTEM INFORMATION

COMPONENTS

INSPECTIONS

General Info

System Type

Alternative

Engineer

Scott Harter, PE

Contractor

Meyers

Install Approved Date

10/8/2009

Design Flow (GPD)

750

Maintenance

Interval

6

Last Maint. Date

4/1/2025

Expiration Date

10/15/2025

Provider

Zinks Septic Solutions

System Notes

[Empty text area for notes]

0/1000

System Documents

[+ADD](#)

[CCF11212014_00001.pdf](#)



[EDIT LOCATION](#)

[ASSOCIATE PARCELS](#)

[MARKUP](#)



PROPERTY INFORMATION

Parcel ID: 3246001680200001016000
 Owner: [REDACTED] LLC
 Address: 5709 Applewood Dr
 Muni: Town of South Bristol
 County: Ontario

Associated Parcels: [Empty list]
 Watershed: Canandaigua Lake
 Bldg Type: Residential
 #Bdrms: 6

GENERAL SYSTEM INFORMATION

COMPONENTS

INSPECTIONS

TANK

Design Type: Aerobic
 # of Tanks: 1
 Alarm?
 Effluent Filter?
 Material Type: Concrete
 Install Date: 12/14/2010
 Capacity (GAL): [Empty] Capacity (GPD): 750
 Manufacturer: [Empty]
 Model: [Empty] 0/1000
 Tank Notes: [Empty] 0/1000

ABSORPTION SYSTEM

Design Type: Gravelless
 # of Lines: 6
 Length of All Lines ...: 395
 Conduit Material Type: PVC/Poly
 Install Date: 12/14/2010
 Separate Gray Water System?
 Soil Type: Silt Loam
 GW Depth: > 6 feet
 Distances (ft) to Nearest:
 Property Well: [Empty]
 Neighbor Well: [Empty]
 Watercourse: [Empty]
 Waterbody: [Empty]
 Property Line: [Empty]
 Absorption Notes: [Empty] 0/1000

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Design Type: PumpGravity
 Distribution Notes: Single Distribution Box
 Material Type: Concrete

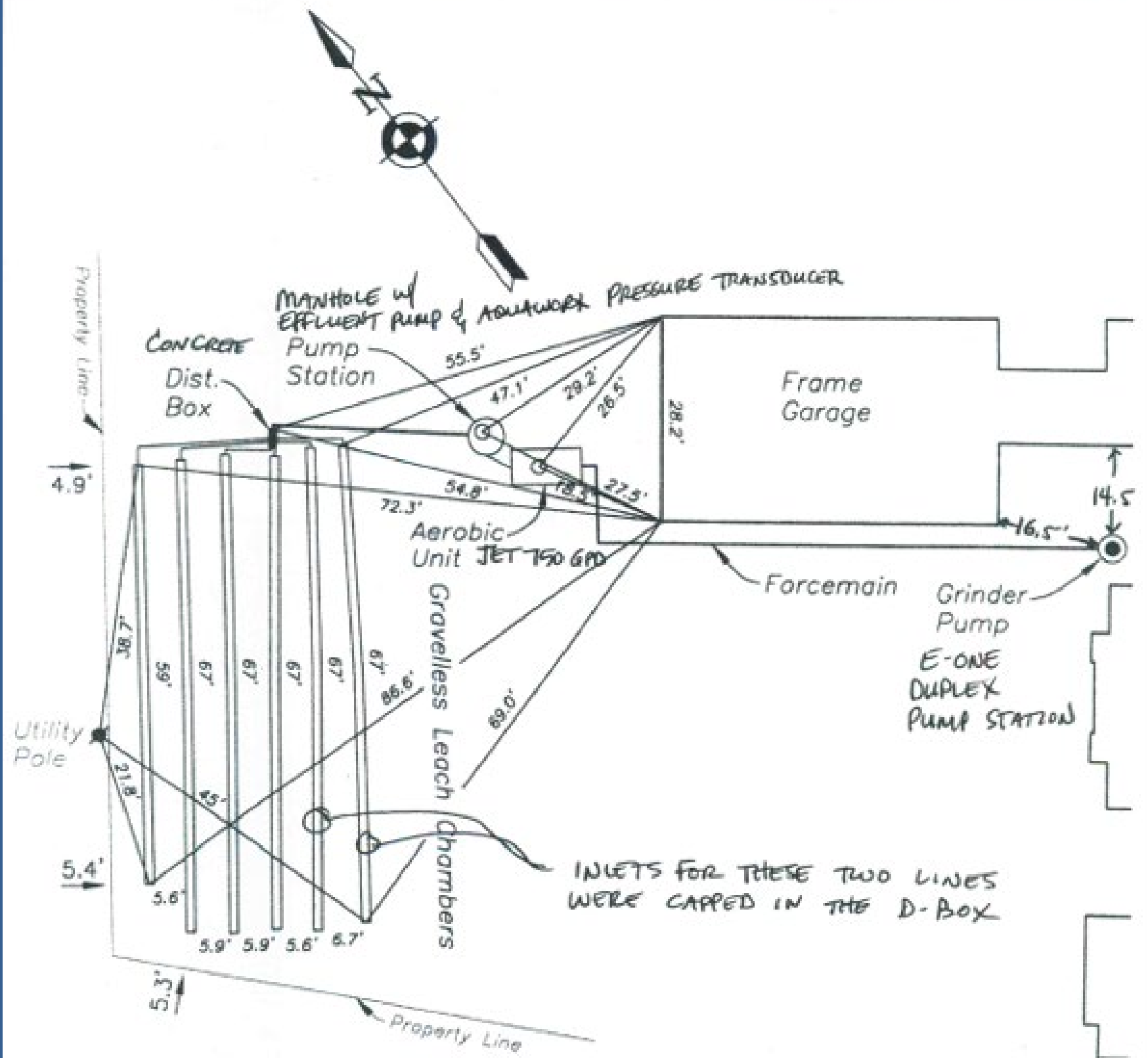
ONSITE LAST SAVED 5/16/2025, 9:02:29 AM

[DELETE](#)

[CLOSE](#)

[SAVE ONSITE](#)

[ARCHIVE](#)



5709 APPLEWOOD DRIVE
 TOWN OF SOUTH BRISTOL
 SEPTIC SYSTEM SKETCH

INSPECTED 6/18/19
 BY WILLIAM GROVE, PE



NYS Septic System Replacement Program

Managed by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Cost Share Program Providing Funding for Repair or Replacement of Septic Systems

Reimbursement Program offering 50/50 Cost Share up to \$10,000

4 Rounds of Funding to Date

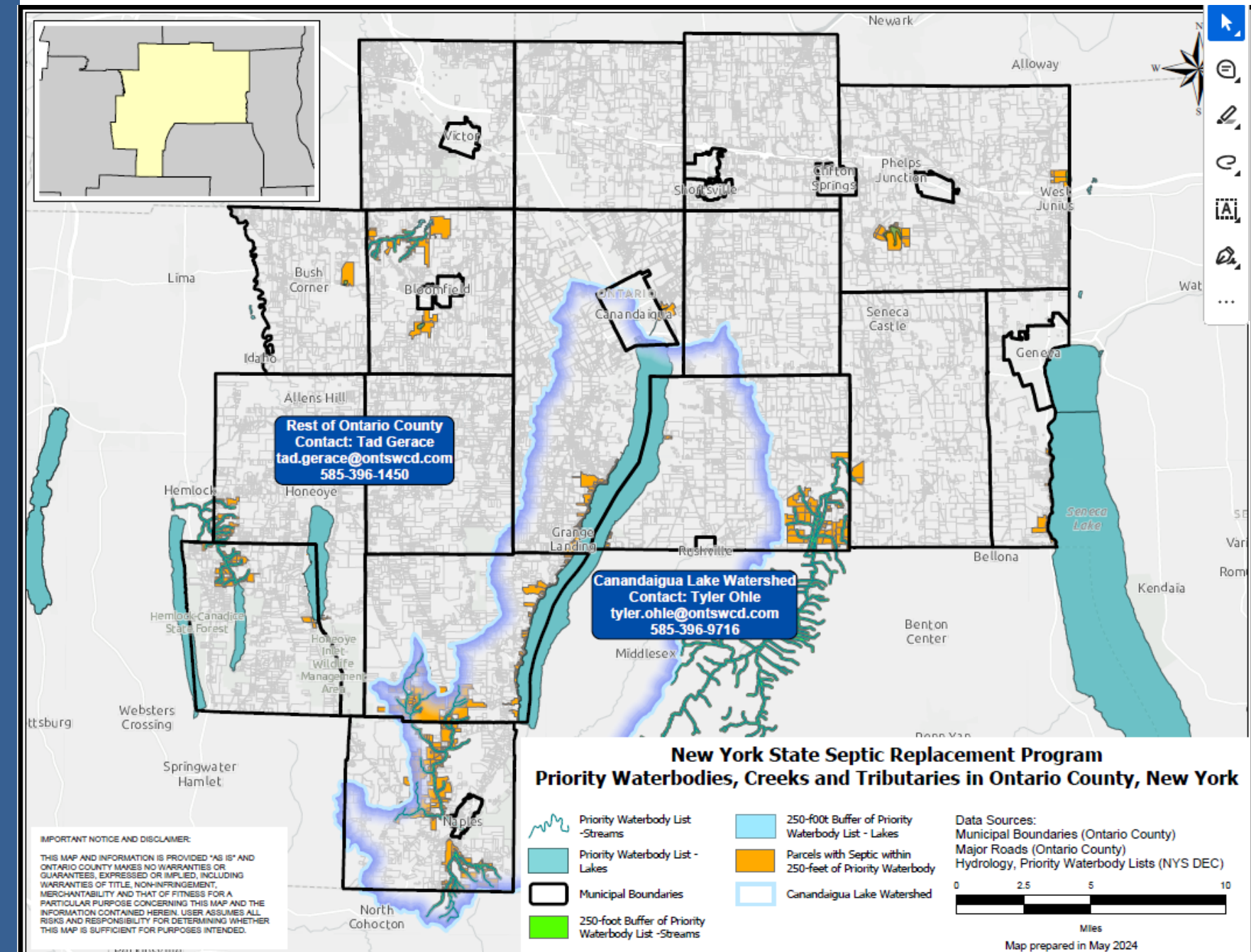
Ontario County Round 1: 23 completed

Round 4: 23 awarded

The state Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Health determined priority geographic areas in which property owners are eligible to participate based on the following factors:

- Presence of a sole-source aquifer used for drinking water.
- Known water quality impairment linked to failing septic systems and the ability for septic system upgrades to mitigate water quality impairments.
- Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List (WI/PWL) segments that are listed as impaired or stressed for nutrients from septic systems.
- WI/PWL segments that have a public water supply intake located within the WI/PWL segment.
- Waterbodies that are Class A, AA, A-S, AA-S according to the WI/PWL segment.
- Forest Preserve waterbodies.

DEC and DOH will re-evaluate priority waterbodies in future rounds of funding.





December 3, 2026

WATER WORKSHOP

Credits Approved through NYS Department of State:

5.5 Credit Hours for Real Estate Professionals

3 Credit Hours for Code Enforcement and Administration

2 Credit hours in Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code



Location: Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District

480 North Main Street

Canandaigua, NY 14424

Cost: \$15 and pre-registration is required. Please email info@ontariocountyswcd.gov or call (585)396-1450 by December 1.

*Light refreshments & lunch will be provided. Please make checks payable to **Ontario County SWCD**.*

Schedule: Thursday, December 3, 2026 from 8:30am to 3:00pm

Presentation Topics:

- Groundwater/Surface Water Basics
- Wells for Drinking Water - Installation & Maintenance
- Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems
- Wetlands/Floodplains & Protected Areas
- Drainage & Stormwater Management

Target Audience: Real estate professionals, municipal officials, and planning & zoning board members

Registration

Name(s): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Outreach Events

- Town Board Presentations
- Code Enforcement Officer Meetings/trainings
- Stormwater Workshops
- Public Events

SAVE THE DATE

STORMWATER CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 4, 2026

The Ontario-Wayne Stormwater Coalition presents the 2026 Stormwater Conference, a day filled with excellent presentations on relevant stormwater and MS4 Permit topics at Hotel Canandaigua.



Tad Gerace

Tad Gerace
UPP Program
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Tyler Ohle

Tyler Ohle
Canandaigua Lake Watershed
Inspection Program
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Ontario County SWCD:
480 North Main Street
Canandaigua, NY 14424
ontariocountyswcd.gov
585-396-1450



THANK YOU

Ontario County Soil & Water
Conservation District



www.ontariocountyswcd.gov



Hatch-Bradley Brook Lakes Association

Eaton, NY

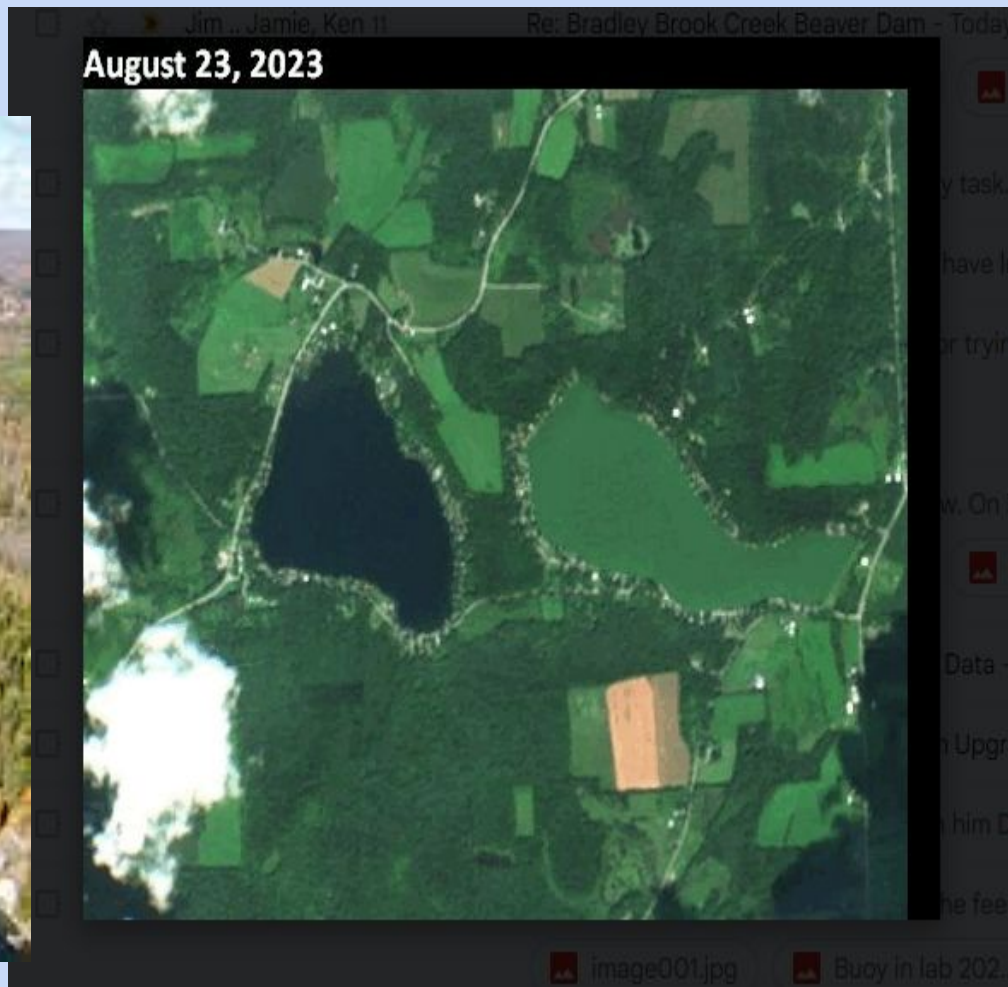
Carol Borg, Director

A little lake background:

Hatch Lake: kettle lake that is spring fed, surface area is 134 acres and maximum depth is 66 feet. Spillway that connects to Bradley Brook; water flows from Hatch to Bradley.

Bradley Brook: reservoir receiving water from the Hatch spillway as well as several tributaries, surface area is 137 acres and maximum depth is 29 feet. Dam empties into Chenango Canal System, the Susquehanna, to the Chesapeake Bay.

Before & After



Possible Causes of Lakewide Bloom

Air temperature was warmer than usual

Water temperature was warmer than usual

Weather events were more frequent and more severe

Culverts from hillsides deposited additional sediment into the lake during storms

Aging septic systems contribute nitrogen and phosphorus to the lake

It was the summer of the perfect storm of conditions for HABs!

What can humans control? Septic systems!

Looking ahead:

Continue property owner education to build awareness through lake associations, conferences, and organizations. Encouraging participation in any programs to assist with septic replacement, inspections, or pump-outs.

Participate in local and county government to emphasize the importance of clean water for all sizes of water bodies. If laws can be enacted regarding septic system inspection and maintenance, there must be funding available for enforcement.

Remind property owners (especially lake residents) that their biggest resource is the lake, not their home. That resource is shared with a community and accordingly, responsibility for should be shared by the community.

Raising awareness with help from EFC

