

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Mary Pat McCarthy: mccarthy@tmacog.org
419.241.9155 ext. 106

Homeowners in Portage River Watershed Eligible for Septic System Funds

Homeowners in targeted areas of Hancock, Ottawa, Sandusky and Wood counties may be eligible for funding that would help pay for failed septic systems. The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), working in partnership with health departments of the four counties, received a grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) that will share the cost to replace failed systems that are affecting water quality in areas targeted for attention. Health departments are now accepting applications for replacements. Installations must be completed by June 30, 2008 when the grant program concludes.

The first priority is replacement of systems that have clearly failed, with visible sewage discharge to the Portage River or its tributaries. Health departments will also be looking at areas where they know that the septic systems are older. The working life of a properly maintained home sewage treatment system is 20 to 30 years.

To apply for grant funds, homeowners should contact their county health departments:

- Hancock County Health Department, John Shoop, Registered Sanitarian, 419-424-7869 (after February 29, contact Lindsay Summit in Hancock County: 419-424-7869 bdhealth@co.hancock.oh.us)
- Ottawa County Health Department, Scott Young, RS, Director of Environmental Health, 419-734-6800
- Sandusky County Health Department, Martha Dennis, 419-334-6372
- Wood County Health Department, Jerry Bingham, RS, Supervisor of Environmental Health, 419-352-8402

Homeowners can also download the application from the TMACOG website: www.tmacog.org.

Applications will be evaluated and ranked by an advisory committee. If selected for the program, and after the homeowner hires a contractor and all details are confirmed, grant funds will pay the contractor for half the cost of the project (up to \$4,000 for a conventional system). This project is for residential systems only, not for businesses or institutions. It will not pay for sewer taps, or for systems that discharge off-lot.

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