



**Lorain County
Rural Wastewater District**
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MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

May/June 2012

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

By: Robert J. Berner

The last two months have brought tremendous weather to our area. Our Phase I contractors have been busy finishing up punch list items to close out the construction of the project. It is also good to see all our local farmers busy preparing fields and planting crops.

In our last newsletter I introduced LORCO's plan to begin educating the public on the cost associated with home sewage treatment systems. In this newsletter, I will provide information developed by the Ohio State University Extension concerning soil conditions in Lorain County.

Lorain County has 301,356 residents according to the 2010 US Census. A majority, about 85%, of the people live in incorporated areas of the county. The other 15% represent nearly 45,000 people who live in the rural areas of Lorain County. Many of these households have traditionally been serviced by home sewage treatment systems.

Home sewage treatment systems have been common in rural Lorain County. The types of systems used over the years have varied. Each year we learn more and more about the quality of the water filtration systems used to treat wastewater and their effect on the environment. Bulletin 896 published by The Ohio State University Extension reveals that less than 5% of the soils in Lorain County are suitable for traditional leach line systems. Unfortunately, there are a significant number of home sewerage treatment systems throughout Lorain County which utilize a leach line system. Because the soils are not suitable to properly filter the water leaching through these systems, the result is

a significant level of polluted water entering our streams and waterways leading to degradation of the water quality.

In 1978 Dr. Convers of the University of Wisconsin designed on onsite wastewater treatment system utilizing mounding. The system uses sand, fabric and topsoil to filter wastewater. This system has become the predominant method of new home sewage treatment systems in Lorain County. Unfortunately, only 10-20% of the soils in Lorain County are suitable for mound systems. But, they are the best option available to homeowners who do not have access to a central sewer collection system.

Over the last few years we have heard many arguments from property owners defending their home sewage treatment systems. They argue their systems are working "just fine" and they have properly maintained them. I'm not here to dispute their claim. Even if they are working as designed, the soil conditions in Lorain County would indicate a properly operating home sewerage treatment system is degrading the natural streams and waterways in our county. This degradation will have a lasting impact on our water quality for future generations.

Next time we will explore the cost associated with properly maintaining a home sewage treatment system.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

By: James McConnell

This month, Director Berner and I will begin visiting our member communities to update them on our current efforts. I am looking forward to seeing our township trustees and clerks along with council members and mayors from our three villages.