



Indiana State
Department of Health
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Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Gregory N. Larkin, M.D., F.A.A.F.P.
State Health Commissioner

February 8, 2012

Vicki L. Perry, director
Indiana RCAP
1845 W. 18th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Ms. Perry:

Re: Sewage Disposal
McKinney/Paxson Area
Wells County

The information provided to this agency by Heath Butz (Wells Co. Health Dept.), and visits to the area by my staff, indicates that inappropriate sewage system construction or lack of any individual sewage disposal systems are the major reasons for the sewage disposal problems acknowledged in the McKinney/Paxson Ditch area. Poor soil conditions, and in some cases density of development, private well locations, lot size, and lot configuration preclude the possibility of using individual onsite sewage disposal systems as a means of eliminating the existing sewage disposal problems in most of this area.

A community approach for collection of wastewater from the residences in the area to a central or decentralized treatment system is the optimal approach. System type will have to be determined after an engineered study is conducted and approved.

It is critical that the sewage disposal problems in the community be addressed as soon as possible. Any further delays will: 1) continue the existence of a public health hazard; 2) decrease the property values in the area; 3) hinder further development in this area; 4) increase project costs to the property owners due to inflation and the probability of further reductions in government funding and low-cost loans; and 5) may force the local health department to address health hazards individually through enforcement of state rules and statutes and local ordinances. These considerations will ultimately add to the cost and delay a comprehensive approach to the problem. In addition, concerns exist regarding the health and safety around or near the ditches and drainageways that contain documented sewage contamination. As you are aware, several infectious diseases can be contracted from contact with improperly treated sewage such as: Salmonellosis, Shigellosis, Dysentery, Polio, Hepatitis (Type A), Amebiasis, and Giardiasis to name a few. Pools of sewage can also provide ideal breeding places for the mosquitoes most likely to be responsible for the spread of St. Louis Encephalitis and West Nile Virus.

According to information from the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service's Soil Survey and this agency, the opportunity to correct

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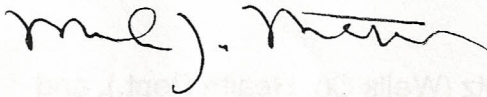
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many of the individual sewage disposal problems on site is severely limited by such conditions as soil removal, compaction, filling, poor filter, flooding, and/or a seasonal high water table within 34 inches of the soil surface. Moreover, this particular area is further hindered by the presence of glacial moraine characteristics in the soil.

It is obvious from our interpretation of the findings that the public health and economic impact that accompanies the resolution of a problem of this magnitude is far reaching and will affect most, if not all, of the residents living in the McKinney/Paxson Ditch area. We recognize that the local Regional Sewer District and the county health department can provide the catalyst needed to generate awareness and provide the focus that will be required in order to resolve this matter. We will continue to offer our support when needed and requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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cc: Heath Butz, Wells County Health Dept. ✓
Wells County Regional Sewer District ✓
Alice Quinn, ISDH