



## USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

### Demonstrating Septic System Management

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension personnel conducted a demonstration to educate people firsthand about properly managing septic systems, especially the importance of system inspection and tank pumping to protect water quality and human health. Participants also learned about special cost-share programs available in targeted areas of the watershed to help property owners with septic system inspections, tank pumping, and upgrading or replacing substandard or failing septic systems.

Twelve of the 14 non-extension participants completed an evaluation of the demonstration. It showed that participants increased their knowledge of wastewater management and planned to apply what they learned. For example, as a result of the demonstration:

- All 12 agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge of septic systems and system management increased.
- All five participants who owned a septic system agreed or strongly agreed that the information would be useful in managing their septic systems.
- Three septic system owners agreed or strongly agreed that they planned to make changes to their septic system to reduce environmental and/or human health risks as a result of attending the demonstration, while two were uncertain. Planned actions were: "have my tank inspected and then proceed as needed"; "have someone look at my septic system and pump my septic tank"; and "upgrade septic system."
- All three septic system owners who lived in the area eligible for cost-sharing indicated that they would take advantage of this program.
- An immediate outcome was that two of the participants from within the target area hired the pumping business owner to have their septic systems inspected and tanks pumped. The pumper truck went directly from the demonstration to one of these sites.

This presentation will describe the content and results of this demonstration and another that was conducted in a different targeted watershed.

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