

Operator Center

CERTIFICATION, TRAINING, AWARDS, AND CAREERS

CUSTOMER OUTREACH

Awareness Campaign Targets Septic Tank Owners



REALTOR:
...And you'll love the view.

(AS THEY WALK, WE HEAR AN OBNOXIOUS "SQUISHING" SOUND WITH EACH FOOTSTEP.)



REALTOR:
...Just blocks from the ocean.

(SQUISH, SQUISH) EACH FOOTSTEP.)



WOMAN:
(under — to the Man) What's that smell??



REALTOR:
The back porch is beautiful.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.): Septic tank failure is a serious problem.

The West Virginia University Research Corporation Department of [National Small Flows Clearinghouse](#) is developing a series of public service announcements (PSAs) about residential water quality and septic tank maintenance. The PSAs are to be distributed to TV stations in small markets nationwide.

According to NSFC, at least a quarter of US homes aren't connected to city sewers, and many homes have their own wastewater treatment setups with septic tanks or other on-site systems. Without proper maintenance, such systems can

malfunction, potentially causing environmental and public health problems and lowering property values.

[The Hoffman Agency](#), based in Jacksonville, Fla., is producing the 30-sec TV spots using tongue-in-cheek humor to explain the pitfalls of poor septic tank maintenance. The campaign also highlights NSFC as a viewer resource for community and professional technical assistance, training, and educational products through its website (www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc), publications, and on-site demonstration projects.

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

MASSACHUSETTS REVISES CONTACT HOUR POLICIES

The [Massachusetts Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities](#) amended its policy for renewal training courses to require all operators applying for a renewal certificate to obtain 50 percent of their training contact hours (TCHs) from courses directly related to operating drinking water supply distribution or treatment facilities. Based on TCH audits, the board observed that many operators only acquire TCHs in areas of safety and administration, rather than courses directly related to operations such as pump maintenance, chlorine and disinfection, instrumentation and measurement, regulatory requirements, etc.

The board also voted to allow relevant

TCHs that are provided by a federal agency, other Massachusetts state agencies, or any state's drinking water certification program. Because most of these agencies don't apply to the board for approval of the training, the board has been unable to grant such TCHs in the past.

In the New England Water Works Association newsletter, [The Source](#), Paul Niman, the board's chair, stated that the changes are intended to increase the relevancy of training obtained by licensed operators and to provide increased opportunity for training for licensed operators. The policy changes went into effect in May 2006 and will be required for renewal of certificates that expire on Dec. 31, 2007.

STORYBOARD: THE HOFFMAN AGENCY