

The EPA's Stormwater Phase II program is a stormwater management program that is intended to improve the Nation's waterways by reducing the quantity of pollutants that enter the waterways mainly via storm sewer systems. The EPA has recently mandated additions to the Phase II program, requiring all home sewage treatment systems (HSTS's) in the urbanized area receive an inspection by the local health department. The purpose of this inspection program will be to determine if HSTS's are operating as designed and intended and not discharging improperly treated sewage. HSTS's that are not operating as designed and intended will be required to be repaired or replaced, and will be required to obtain a permit from the Stark County Health Department prior to any repairs taking place. **The Stark County Health Department will NOT be requiring homeowners with a properly functioning HSTS to upgrade their system to meet today's standards.**

The Stark County Health Department's Phase II Stormwater Specialists have begun conducting HSTS inspections. This inspection comes at no charge to the homeowner and does not require the homeowner be present. Typically, records of most of the HSTS's installed are on file at the Stark County Health Department. The exception would be older HSTS's or HSTS's installed without a permit. These records are copied and taken to each inspection which allows the health department to know precisely what is in the ground and the location of each of the septic system's components. The inspection typically consists of walking the area of the HSTS and looking for any signs of system failure. Septic tanks with exposed lids are sometimes opened to determine if the tank is operating at an acceptable level. Additionally, homes that utilize aeration units are checked to ensure that the aerator is on (aerators must be allowed to run continually), the filters are checked, and the effluent is examined to ensure that the aerator is functioning properly.

Upon completion of the inspection, a copy of the record (if available) of the HSTS will be left for the homeowner along with an informative brochure. If any problems with the HSTS are found the homeowner will be contacted by the Stark County Health Department and given information on what needs to be corrected.

Any questions regarding this new program can be directed to the Stark County Health Department at (330) 493-9904.