COTTONWOOD COUNTY SEPTIC PROGRAM

SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEM (SSTS) INSTALLATION PROCESS

A Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS), or "septic system," that is properly designed, installed, and maintained will ensure that the system will function well into the future and provide the necessary environmental protection. This document outlines the steps for designing and installing a quality septic system that is worth the investment for your home in Cottonwood County.

STEP 1 - CONTACT A LICENSED SSTS INSTALLER

Cottonwood County keeps a list of contractors who are licensed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to design, install, and maintain septic systems in our area. Some of the contractors are only licensed to install septic systems, but they usually have a relationship with a designer who will design the system for them. You, the homeowner, should contact an installer you want to work with. The contractor will contact Cottonwood County to set up a Site Evaluation to start the design process. This would also be the time to contact Cottonwood County if you are interested in applying for a Low-Interest Loan.

STEP 2 - SITE EVALUATION

The Site Evaluation is the most important part of design process. The location, type, and size of the septic system is determined during the Site Evaluation. The Cottonwood County Septic Ordinance requires that a Qualified Employee of Cottonwood County conducts the Site Evaluation with a licensed SSTS Designer. We also encourage the homeowner to be present at the Site Evaluation to provide information on the number of bedrooms in the home, if any water using devices (water softener, iron filter, etc) or garbage disposals are present in the home, and if there is a business in the home that may effect the waste composition from the home.

Cottonwood County will provide Site Evaluation information to other contractors if the homeowner wants to solicit more bids.

STEP 3 - DESIGN APPROVAL

After the Site Evaluation is completed, a licensed SSTS Designer will complete a design for a system that meets all of the requirements of the State SSTS Rules and the Cottonwood County Ordinance and submit the design to Cottonwood County SWCD. We will review the design to ensure that it was completed properly. A SSTS design that is approved by Cottonwood County will be issued an SSTS Construction Permit. The SSTS Fee due at time of Permit issuance. We mail the homeowner and the installer a copy. The homeowner should call the installer to set up a construction date.

STEP 4 - INSTALLATION

After the design is approved, construction of the new septic system may start at any time providing the conditions are favorable for construction. The Installer must let Cottonwood County know when the system will be installed and when the system will be ready for inspection. Cottonwood County inspects the components of a septic system after all of the connections have been made and before backfilling and final cover.

STEP 5 - CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

After the final inspection of the septic system, the installer draws up an "as-built" of the system and Cottonwood County will issue a Certificate of Compliance which will be sent to the homeowner. The Certificate of Compliance is valid for 5 years after its issuance.