

THE ROUGE RIVER PROJECT
A WORLD CLASS EFFORT



BRINGING OUR RIVER BACK TO LIFE

On-Site Sewage Disposal System Project in the Tonquish Creek and Middle 3 Subwatershed, Rouge River, Michigan

A publication of the Wayne County Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project
Information Date: February 2000

Objective

The purpose of the on-site sewage disposal systems (OSDS) project in Tonquish Creek and the Middle 3 Rouge subwatershed was to:

- investigate the operating condition of OSDS,
- document any evidence of direct or indirect discharges OSDS to the Rouge River, and
- educate homeowners, promote connection to available sewers and develop a program for operation and maintenance of OSDS.

Owner

Wayne County Dept of Public Health,
Environmental Health Section

Location

Canton Township, Dearborn Heights, Garden City, Livonia, Northville Township, Plymouth city, Plymouth Township, Redford Township and Westland, Michigan

Dates

January 1, 1997 – December 31, 1997

Total Project Cost

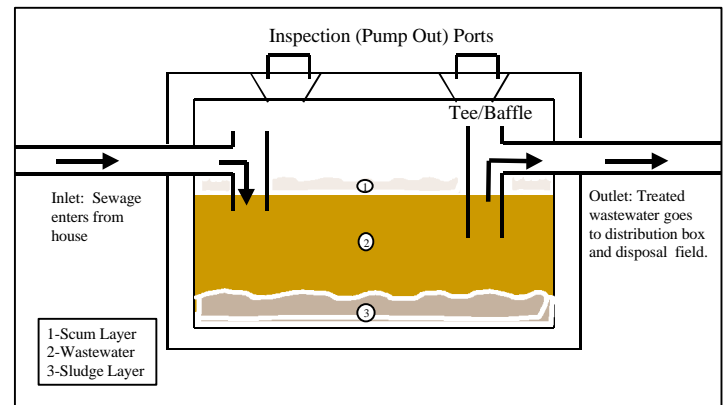
\$122,000



**Innovative Monitoring Protocols to
Identify Failing OSDS**

Demonstration Aspects

- An approach to identifying OSDS failure rates was developed.
- A public education program was created to inform homeowners and provide consultation about OSDS system maintenance and operation.



Cross Section of Typical Septic Tank

- The study conclusions and recommendations can be used by other watershed areas to find, control or eliminate pollution from failing OSDS.

Project Highlights

- 421 field surveys were conducted to determine failing or potential failing OSDS in the nine-community study area.
- The study established a computer database to record pertinent information, analyze the data and make recommendations for corrective actions regarding OSDS.
- Average failure rate for the 421 systems evaluation was 21%.

**On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems Project Within the
Tonquish Creek and Middle 3 Subwatershed Area – Rouge River, Michigan**

- The average cost for a survey was \$290 per system.
- A flier titled “Septic Systems” which explained, how an OSDS works, how to care for your system, signs of a system failing and who to call, was provided to homeowners during the survey of their property.
- Seventy-seven homeowners reported that they were connected to sanitary sewers however there were no corresponding municipal records. Records were subsequently updated.

To obtain further information on the Rouge Project, including documents, maps and general information, visit us at:

<http://www.rougeriver.com>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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