



THE MOUNTAIN MEMO

Volume 8 Number 2

November, 1992

Can you believe that the hot days of swatting knats on the mountain are giving way to stark trees and a hint of snow? Soon we will be seeing Bud Wyman and his grandchildren flying down Hill Road on their sleds! Wintertime on the mountain is a very special time.....quietness and tranquility. I am looking forward to having an "oldtime family Christmas" on the mountain this year ...hot mulled cider, the tree decorated with popcorn and cranberries, and plenty of goodies for our whole family to enjoy. We have never experienced a family (21 of us!) get-together in our cabin so it should prove to be very interesting.

Your editor and all board members extend GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAYS !!!!!

GYPSY MOTH UPDATE

The Department of Natural Resources has completed the egg-mass count on the property and report that spraying will be necessary in the spring. Arrangements have been made for this to be done and more information will be provided in the spring newsletter.

SECURITY

We are saddened to report that Shannan Whitachre, who has been doing our security checks for many years, is experiencing health problems. Beginning December 1, 1992, Smiley and Barbara Wisner have been hired to be security personnel. They will have the responsibility of making staggered tours of the property making sure all is well. Should you wish to send Mr. Whitachre a card or note his address is: Rt 2 Box 35, Paw Paw, West Virginia, 25434.

DON'T FORGET TO LOCK THE GATE !!!!!

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A note from our Treasurer.....

Annual Road Maintenance Fees (\$50.00) will be due by January 31, 1993. You will receive a separate bill after the first of the year. Please make every effort to pay promptly. A late fee of \$5.00 will apply if payment is not received by January 31. IMPORTANT - Please notify Shirley DePaolis or Dee Smith of any change of address.

Thank you,

Shirley

Welcome

We wish to say "welcome to the Mountain" to new property owner Elaine Young of Baltimore. Ms. Young purchased the Steve Biegel property.

Safety Tips:

Barrels of sand have been placed on the steep incline of Hill Road to be used when needed. You might want to put a shovel in your vehicle.

A Fire Extinguisher and barrel of water would be very helpful in case of a fire we're a long way from the Fire Department.

THIS 'N THAT

The enclosed article on Septic Systems should be informative to all property owners, those who already have septic systems and those who will need to have one installed.

How a septic system works

Many people don't understand septic systems. Over 80% of Morgan County homes and businesses use them. Most of the new homes in Morgan County are hooked up to septic systems.

People who moved here from urban areas, as well as some long time residents, may think that their system will last forever. But they only have a life expectancy of 20 to 30 years under ideal conditions. Without regular maintenance, systems can fail even sooner and contaminate wells and groundwater.

The Basic System

The basic system consists of just two components: 1) a septic tank and 2) a soil absorption system, usually called the drainfield.

1) **SEPTIC TANK** - The septic tank is usually a 750 to 1250 gallon concrete box located down slope from a house. A central sewer line from the house carries wastewater by gravity flow to the tank. Septic tanks are usually located at least ten feet from the edge of buildings. Primary treatment of wastewater begins in the tank with the physical separation of solids and liquids. The tank is generally sized to hold at least one day's worth of household water. This allows adequate time for the separation and settling action to take place.

As the separation occurs, the heavy solids (sludge) sink to the bottom of the tank where, over time, about 50 percent of the solids are decomposed by bacteria. The lighter particles (scum) including fats and oils, float on the surface of the water. Baffles prevent the scum from leaving the tank with the separated liquid (effluent) and moving on into the drainfield. As the system is used, the sludge and scum accumulate in the tank. Between the tank and the drainfield, there is usually a distribution box, which transmits the effluent into drainlines.

2) **DRAINFIELD** - The soil adsorption system is composed of drainlines, which are usually 4 inch diameter, plastic, perforated pipe. Gravel usually surrounds the lines, which are installed in ditches about 18 to 24 inches deep. Some drainlines are installed without gravel at much shallower depths. The length and number of lines in a drainfield is determined by several criteria: 1) Number of bedrooms - how many people will be using the system; 2) Perk test - how quickly the soil can absorb or transmit water; and 3) Ditch width.

The drainfield moves effluent evenly out of the lines and into the soil. Soil and the organisms that live there can accomplish very satisfactory treatment of effluent if the capacity of the soil is not exceeded. Disease caus-

ing microorganisms, organics, and nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus are filtered out of the wastewater, and broken down by physical and chemical reactions as well as by soil organisms. The treated effluent eventually makes its way to the groundwater. Soil must not be continually saturated for the drainfield to work properly.

Operation and Maintenance

To help the septic system function properly and reach its life expectancy, here are some basic recommendations.

Have the septic tank pumped on a regular basis. As sludge and scum build up in the tank, some solids begin to escape into the drainfield. These particles clog the area, greatly reducing its ability to treat wastewater. The pumping schedule depends on the tank size and the number of people in the household. See the chart at the bottom for a recommended schedule.

Protect the drainfield from vehicles and surface runoff. Because this area is usually moist, cars or trucks crossing the drainlines can crush the pipe or compact the soil. Adding more surface water from roof and foundations drains causes waterlogging, shutting out air necessary for successful treatment.

Keep a good shallow rooted cover over the drainfield. Grass is best if the drainfield is in a lawn. Never fertilize grass above the drainfield. Avoid planting trees and shrubs near the drainfield, which have roots that may clog the lines. In a wooded, shady area, natural leaf litter should be left in place on top of the drainfield.

Don't shock the system. Spreak laundry chores throughout the week to avoid adding too much water to the system in one day. Don't pour chemicals such as disinfectants, solvents, paints, poisons, and oils down the drain. Avoid use of additives designed to "clean" the system. As a rule, additives have not been proven to work, and may actually harm the system by upsetting the natural balance.

Refrain from using the septic tank as a sanitary landfill. Solids such as cigarette butts, plastic, disposable diaper liners, coffee grounds, sanitary napkins and cardboard, should never be flushed down the drain.

Avoid the use of garbage disposals. Kitchens wastes greatly increase the accumulation of solids in the tank as well as the drainfield. This modern convenience ultimately can create more trouble than it is worth. If it is used, septic tanks should be sized bigger, and pumped more frequently. Composting kitchen wastes is a better method.

SUGGESTED SEPTIC TANK PUMPING SCHEDULE (in years)

Tank Size (gal)	No. of People							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	10
750	9.0	4.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.5	0.5
1000	12.5	6.0	3.5	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.5
1250	15.5	7.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0

More pumping needed if garbage disposal is used.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Sheriff	304 258-1187
Berkeley Springs State Police	304 258-2101
Great Cacapon Fire Dept	304 258-1122
Paw Paw Fire Dept	304 887-7311
U. S. Dept of Agriculture	
Chas E Williams, Ext Agent	304 258-1431
Office of West Virginia Governor	304 348-2000
Potomac Edison (Electric Co)	304 258 1140
Post Office (Great Cacapon)	304 258 1012
C & P Telephone Co	1800 544-5677
Bernie Hook	304 258-4346
Steiner's Plumbing & Heating	304 258-2420
Roger L. DeHaven Well Drilling	703 888-3800

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Howard Smith	301 663-6787
Shirley DePaolis	301 271-4000
Mauricio Torres	304 258-9442
David Klaas	301 882-4059
Melissa Corder	304 258-6145
Alternates	
Alvin Long	410 876-8903
Phyliss Manimbo	304 754-9598

Note: Anyone wishing to share information on contractors that have been helpful please let a board member or your editor know.

The MOUNTAIN MEMO will be published twice a year - Spring and Fall. The Spring issue will include information on our annual meeting. Any information to be included in the newsletter is welcomed.



THE MOUNTAIN MEMO
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Forwarding and Address
Correction Requested

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