



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
REGARDING COOPERATION IN
DECENTRALIZED WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS
BETWEEN THE U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
AND SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS**

**National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT)
National Association of Wastewater Transporters, Inc. (NAWT)
National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)
National Environmental Services Center (NESC)
National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, Inc. (NOWRA)
Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. (RCAP)
Water Environment Federation (WEF)
Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment (CIDWT)**

Introduction: This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into and between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the following Signatory Organizations: National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT); National Association of Wastewater Transporters, Inc. (NAWT); National Environmental Health Association (NEHA); National Environmental Services Center (NESC); National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, Inc. (NOWRA); Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. (RCAP); Water Environment Federation (WEF); and Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment (CIDWT). These organizations are referred to herein as the Signatory Organizations. Additionally, this Memorandum of Understanding is referred to simply as the MOU.

Purpose: The purpose of this MOU is to formalize the ongoing cooperative relationship between the EPA and the Signatory Organizations in order to effectively address issues pertaining to decentralized wastewater treatment systems. The MOU is intended to facilitate cooperation, collaboration, consultation, coordination, and effective communication between the EPA and the Signatory Organizations.

Objectives: The objectives of this MOU are to:

- Strengthen external partnerships.
- Improve decentralized wastewater treatment system performance through improved practitioner competency, management practices, and technology transfer.
- Improve accountability, control, and oversight through enhanced state, tribal and local program implementation.
- Improve local decision-making through improved public awareness, education programs, and information materials.
- Support the principles outlined in the *Voluntary Management Guidelines and Management Handbook for Decentralized Systems* prepared by EPA's Office of Wastewater Management.

Collaborative Activities: EPA and the Signatory Organizations will collaborate on activities that may include, but are not limited to, the following tasks:

- Develop effective mechanisms for information exchange among signatories on program activities, regulations, and plans for engaging members in decentralized system activities.
- Develop a public awareness effort to promote improved system performance.
- Develop materials and participate as presenters or trainees in conferences and training events held by EPA or other Signatory Organizations.
- Provide feedback on upcoming products and materials.
- Provide technical assistance to members of the Signatory Organizations, as appropriate.
- Conduct outreach activities to stakeholder groups that are not represented in this MOU.

EPA and Signatory Organization Activities: EPA and the Signatory Organizations will provide information to their staff about this MOU, and encourage them to become knowledgeable about decentralized wastewater systems. Specific activities to be conducted by each organization are listed in a separate work plan.

Steering Committee Activities: A Steering Committee composed of at least one representative of EPA and each of the Signatory Organizations will be instituted to provide leadership and direction for the MOU. The Steering Committee activities may include, but are not limited to, the following actions:

- Developing a one year action plan that integrates the activities of the EPA and the Signatory Organizations. Each year, the action plan will be updated to reflect upcoming plans.
- Developing annual reports to track and evaluate progress. The Steering Committee will distribute meeting summaries and reports to their respective organizations. Results of activities conducted under this MOU will be advertised to members of the organizations.
- The Steering Committee will hold annual meetings and communicate regularly via phone or web-based conferencing.

Duration of Agreement: The duration of this document is three years. Any Signatory Organization may withdraw, in whole or in part, with written notice to EPA and the other Signatory Organizations. This document may be updated and periodically amended with concurrence of all Signatory Organizations.

Limits:

1. Nothing in this MOU, in and of itself, obligates EPA or the Signatory Organizations to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or to incur other financial obligations. The Signatories understand that they may not submit a claim for compensation for services to EPA solely on the basis of this MOU. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this MOU will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures, and will be subject to separate subsidiary agreements that will be effected in writing by representatives of both parties.

2. EPA may not endorse the purchase or sale of products and services provided by the Signatory Organizations or any of their consultants, contractors or service providers.
3. This MOU does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity against EPA, or the Signatory Organizations, their officers or employees, or any other person. This MOU does not apply to any person outside of EPA or the Signatory Organizations.
4. This MOU does not supercede, alter, supplement, vary or otherwise change financial assistance agreements entered into by EPA with any of the Signatory Organizations. It does not relieve any of the non-Federal Signatories Organizations of obligations or duties contained in financial assistance agreements.

Acceptance: The undersigned agree, on this ____ day of _____, 2005, to the program described in this Memorandum of Understanding.

ALLEN R. FRISCHKORN, JR.
Executive Director
National Association of Towns and
Townships

BRUCE FOX
President
National Association of Wastewater
Transporters, Inc.

Date

Date

JAMES BALSAMO
President
National Environmental Health
Association

RICK PHALUNAS
Interim Executive Director
National Environmental Services Center

Date

Date

RAYMOND PEAT
President
National Onsite Wastewater Recycling
Association, Inc.

RANDY ADAMS
Executive Director
Rural Community Assistance
Partnership, Inc.

Date

Date

WILLIAM J. BERTERA
Executive Director
Water Environment Federation

Date

KITT FARRELL-POE
Chair Elect
Consortium of Institutes for
Decentralized Wastewater Treatment

Date

BENJAMIN H. GRUMBLES
Assistant Administrator for Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Date

ATTACHMENT

Areas of Involvement

For the purposes of this effort only, the parties agree to the following activities:

Organization	Actions
National Association of Towns and Townships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate information about decentralized systems through publications, email lists, member newsletters, conferences, speakers, town and township governments, and other useful venues.
National Association of Wastewater Transporters, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the education of its members, regulatory officials, and homeowners on onsite and decentralized systems. • Provide training, certification courses, and continuing education to raise the level of competence of its service providers. • Expand its educational programs that assist members to be recognized as providers of Operation and Maintenance Programs to the industry. • Continue training and certifying the industry personnel in inspection procedures. • Possibly also develop a Pump Truck Driver Training and Certification Program.
National Environmental Health Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote proper installation, inspection, management and regulation of decentralized wastewater systems. • Disburse information through use of the NEHA website, e-mail list, and the Journal of Environmental Health. • Invite EPA Speakers and visiting scientists to speak at the NEHA Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition. • Promote decentralized wastewater education at conference conventions. • Develop and administer a multi-level certification program for decentralized system installers. • Provide feedback and needs assessment on decentralized wastewater systems. • Continue to build support among environmental health professionals for the EPA Decentralized Wastewater Management Guidelines.

Organization	Actions
<p>National Environmental Services Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as a national resource and clearinghouse to the MOU partners and to the nation on onsite management efforts. • Continue to work with communities directly and explore the need for additional community resources to move them towards management systems. • Continue to work with local and state governments and NGOs to increase the number of managed systems. • Continue to work with the partners to create training experiences through the environmental training program that will allow partner staff members to become more knowledgeable on onsite management options. • Continue to serve as a national clearinghouse for all documents and information on onsite management, and encourage all partners to submit documents and success stories so that they may be shared nationally. Produce information sheets, technology fact sheets and other management resources as funds allow. • Continue to use telephone technical assistance and maintain web-based databases and website to share information nationally. • Continue to publish case studies and other articles in its nationally distributed magazine, the <i>Small Flows Quarterly</i>. • Continue its efforts to explore innovative solutions to onsite management and share those solutions nationally.
<p>National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, Inc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and conduct a national education and information program directed to home and business owners, the home building, realty and finance industries, and regulatory officials about the planning, management, and operation of decentralized wastewater systems. • May develop a special school education project about decentralized systems. • Identify economic and legislative barriers and opportunities to address decentralized systems through its annual conference website links and other forums. • Develop and conduct a Qualifying Installer Education and Training Curriculum that integrates with the NEHA certification program. • Establish and conduct a national Certification Program for all states' training centers and responsible management entities. • Promote the integration of watershed management and sustainable development in planning for decentralized systems through programs and forums, and establish an international resource database of case studies and practices.

Organization	Actions
National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, Inc. (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing a national resource directory of industry products, services and management practices through its website online locator. • Continue to advocate State requirements for continuing education units, practitioner certification and the use of performance base codes through legislation and education forums. • Establish a national standard for providing continuing education units for onsite industry programs. • Continue its leadership role in providing technical education materials and training programs for onsite industry practitioners, professionals and regulatory officials. • Establish a national training program for regulators, planning and environmental professionals on the application and use of performance codes. • Produce professional standards and practices that advance the credibility of technology within the decentralized industry.
Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide onsite technical, managerial, and financial management assistance to rural and tribal communities. • Provide for training workshops on decentralized wastewater technologies and management strategies. • Encourage technical assistance providers to obtain specialized training on wastewater and decentralized treatment topics. • Coordinate efforts with EPA, outreach partners, and other private and public organizations working on rural wastewater issues to encourage adoption of national voluntary standards for management of onsite/decentralized wastewater systems. • Identify communities in need of decentralized alternatives and management programs, or communities that are interested in developing them. • Identify experts who can help with specific decentralized wastewater management issues.
Water Environment Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor workshops, conferences, training courses, and seminars. • Perform outreach efforts through publications, newsletters.

Organization	Actions
Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct and coordinate development of educational materials conveying essential information to homeowners, university students, practitioners, and decision-makers. • Conduct and coordinate research initiatives addressing critical issues facing the onsite wastewater treatment industry. • Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among engineering and the sciences. • Promote multi-sector collaboration and communication among Consortium institutions, professionals, and the public.
Environmental Protection Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to the Signatory Organizations, as requested, which may be in the form of technical guidance, training opportunities, or material and document review. • Develop outreach tools and materials to inform stakeholders of system performance improvement needs. • Actively participate in conferences and meetings sponsored and held by the Signatory Organizations. EPA will attempt to provide active support to the Signatory Organizations in the planning and implementation of events that address the subjects of this MOU. • Organize conference calls and meetings of the Steering Committee. • Provide assistance in upgrading certification programs and establishing a national performance code. • Fund demonstration projects to assist with implementation of improved state and local management programs. • Provide direction and support to signatory organizations to address specific issues that adversely impact the progress and advancement of decentralized systems. • Publicize the availability of training and educational opportunities sponsored by the Signatory Organizations by posting information on its website and including announcement in other appropriate communication outlets.