

# Wells County Health Department

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Date: January 25, 2021

To: Homeowners in Wells County Regional Sewer District Project Areas (Liberty Center or Murray)

Re: Information for Homeowners in Project Areas

A septic system consists of a septic tank, soil absorption field, perimeter drain and no off lot discharge. The majority of the houses in the project areas listed above do not have a complete septic system. These houses that do not have a complete septic system are not in compliance with Rule 410 IAC 6-8.3 regarding residential on-site sewage systems.

If your home does have a complete septic system that is described above, you may qualify for an exemption. The exemptions are as follows:

- The homeowner must prove their septic system is not failing and is not older than twenty (20) years old.
- The homeowner has at least ten (10) acres and can determine two (2) suitable areas for a septic system to be installed. (Note this requires that homeowner install on-lot septic system within the period of the project)

The homeowner can file for an exemption by calling the Wells County Health Department and requesting a dye test or to search for the suspected septic system permit. The homeowner can also have a septic system inspection done at their own cost by a registered septic system installer in Wells County. If the homeowner has the proper amount of acreage, they can call an Indiana Registered Soil Scientist (IRSS) at their property to find two (2) suitable areas for a septic system. If this is the only exemption the homeowner qualifies for, the soil investigation must pass for an exemption to stand. Please note that costs for soils investigations are the responsibility of the homeowner.

Residents within the Murray RSD Project are inside the described area called the Wabash Recessional Moraine or Buttermilk Ridge. Centuries ago, glaciers slide from the northern part of the country to the southern portion of the country. While the glaciers were moving, they compacted the soil and deposited sediments that increased the clay content through this region. Soils in this region have been studied and proven that the particle size analysis on the clay content is extremely high. These soils also have a high likelihood of containing slickensides, high limiting layers, and dense till. These characteristics along with the high clay content make it extremely hard to find a suitable location for a legal septic system. If the homeowner has a legal septic system, it is likely that it will fail.

A legal septic system can cost between 10,000 to 20,000 dollars. This Residential Sewer Project has been designed and funded such that the homeowner cost to connect to the system may be between 1,000 to 3,000 dollars. The cost will vary depending on the type of connection (grinder station or gravity) and the distance to the District main for gravity connections or the distance from the home to the grinder station. The homeowner is required to decommission existing septic tanks. If the homeowner would apply and qualify for an exemption as stated above and in previous letters, and their septic system would fail, the homeowner would be required to hook into the sewer provided by the Residential Sewer District at full cost. That cost could be \$15,000.00 or more.

If the homeowner qualifies for this exemption and they chose to use it and their septic system would fail, they would be required to hook into the sanitary sewer at a later date. If this would occur, the homeowner would be required to pay all costs necessary to connect to the sewer system including the cost of the lateral extension and any tap fee imposed by the District.

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*If you, the homeowner, decide to claim any of these exemptions and they are accepted and approved by the County Health Department, understand that if your on-lot septic system were to be determined to fail at a later date, the homeowner would be required to hook into the Wells County Regional Sewer District and pay all costs required for the connection at that time. To apply for an exemption, you must sign and return this acknowledgement along with the application for exemption form provided to you by the Wells County Regional Sewer District within 60 days.*

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully,



Allison Bolser  
Environmental Health Specialist