

HB834 Eddie Harrison MOWPA FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Edward Harrison

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Regarding
House Bill 834
Onsite Sewage Disposal Systems – Outreach and Education (Septic
Awareness Act of 2022)**

From the desk of:

F Edward Harrison, Jr.

**Representing Maryland Onsite Wastewater Professionals Association (MOWPA)
P.O. Box 2570 Ellicott City, MD 21041
443-570-2029**

MOWPA is in Support of this Bill

My name is Eddie Harrison, I am the legislative liaison representing MOWPA (Maryland Onsite Wastewater Professionals Association). I submit this testimony on behalf of MOWPA, myself, and no other entity.

MOWPA represents all Maryland professionals in the Onsite Industry. We have in our membership: Installers, Pumpers, Engineers, Property Transfer Inspectors, Operation and Maintenance Providers, and Code Officials.

[The Maryland Onsite Wastewater Professionals Association (MOWPA) is a 501 C(6) not-for-profit organization, chartered in September 2004 to provide education and training programs for individuals and companies working in the onsite sewage disposal system industry.

OUR MISSION.....to promote and enhance the use of onsite wastewater treatment and disposal by providing a forum for education, development and information transfer in order to create viable treatment processes, design, construction, operation and maintenance capabilities within the onsite industry. www.mowpa.org

I represent MOWPA as an un-compensated Legislative Liaison, current Vice-President, and former Board President.

My day job is the owner of BAT Onsite, LLC. BAT Onsite, LLC., which is primarily an Operation and Maintenance Provider for automated Onsite Wastewater Systems. Including, but not limited to: Advanced Treatment Units (including BAT), Pump Systems, Mound Systems, Drip Dispersal Systems, and pretty much any Onsite Wastewater System that requires electrical/mechanical operation under 5,000 gallons per day. I am currently servicing over 500 units, covering the whole State of Maryland. I have been working in the Onsite Wastewater Industry as an installer, pumper, designer, property transfer inspector, and operation and maintenance provider since 1984.

MOWPA, as well as myself, are in support of any initiative that provides and encourages education for the Onsite Wastewater Industry. In my experience, I witness so many property owners that have no concept of how their septic system works, how to feed it properly, how to maintain the system properly, or, in some cases, where it is located, or that they have one.

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The Onsite Wastewater System (Septic System) is the most expensive appliance in the home. The simplest, conventional, system requires proper use and periodic maintenance. The more complex systems require a steady maintenance schedule. In both cases, this maintenance is necessary to acquire a long life for the system. Proper maintenance is also important to protect the environment and public health.

This Initiative has been promoted, for several years, by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by the National Onsite Wastewater Recyclers Association (NOWRA), MOWPA's national affiliate.

Maryland, by Legislature or by a Governor's decree, has declared the third week in September as Septic Smart Week for a couple of years now. It would be a great thing for this to be an annual initiative coming from MDE.

Requiring septic related educational materials to be given to new property owners is a very good idea.

Thank you so much for your time and MOWPA encourages a favorable report on HB834.

ShoreRivers Testimony FAV HB834.pdf

Uploaded by: Elle Bassett

Position: FAV



Testimony in SUPPORT of HB834- ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS – OTREACH AND EDUCATION (SEPTIC AWARENESS ACT OF 2022)

February 24, 2022
Environment and Transportation Committee

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT of HB834** on behalf of ShoreRivers. ShoreRivers is a river protection group on Maryland's Eastern Shore with over 2,000 members. Our mission is to protect and restore our Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration, and education.

The waterways of the eastern shore have some of the most waterfront throughout the entire Chesapeake Bay and the majority of that waterfront is developed with residential units using septic systems to manage their sewer waste. The unique sandy soils and high water tables on the Eastern Shore leave the waters of this region susceptible to pollution from failing septic systems. Nutrient and bacterial pollution can cause algal blooms, dead zones, or areas closed to swimming or shellfish harvest.

Personally, I became a homeowner with a septic system in Talbot County in 2018. I had very limited knowledge on proper septic maintenance procedures and was not made aware of any particular actions I should take during the property transfer process. Unfortunately, our system quickly became nonfunctioning, threatening our own and our pet's health as well as the local environment. I could have avoided those consequences if septic outreach and education were prioritized more, especially during property transfer.

ShoreRivers looks forward to being able to share Department education materials and resources during SepticSmart Week with our membership and community members to promote community awareness regarding certain aspects and impacts of on-site sewage disposal systems. ShoreRivers is a strong proponent for policies that help to address pollution coming from septic systems. For the reason and the examples described above, ShoreRivers urges the committee to adopt **House Bill 834**.

For these reasons stated above, ShoreRivers urges the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB834**.

Sincerely,

Elle Bassett
Miles-Wye Riverkeeper, on behalf of:

ShoreRivers

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director
Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper
Elle Bassett, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

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Love Testimony_HB 834_2022_DLH.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Sara Love

Position: FAV

SARA N. LOVE
Legislative District 16
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation
Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 30, 2022

HB 834 – Septic Awareness Act of 2022

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, Honorable Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

HB 834 helps to raise septic awareness by establishing SepticSmart Week in connection with the EPA's established SepticSmart Week¹, and by requiring that new homeowners who are buying a residence with a septic system be provided with certain materials from the EPA.

In 2019, this Committee and the full House passed Montgomery County local bills HB 202 and HB 562. They stalled in the Senate due to a concern that they would result in multiple local bills. As a result, before you today, is a statewide bill.

According to the Maryland Department of Environment, approximately 2.2 million Maryland households - roughly 20% of Maryland households – are on septic. In Montgomery County alone, approximately 20,000 properties are on septic. Ensuring that homeowners and homebuyers are educated on proper septic usage and care is important for both homeowners and the environment.

Currently, nine states have legislatively adopted SepticSmart Week: Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, North Carolina, Virginia, Washington, and Oklahoma. States have taken a variety of clever measures to raise awareness of septic issues.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/septic/septic-systems-outreach-toolkit>

In 2021:

- Officials in New Hampshire took a life-sized cardboard cutout of Septic Sam (see below) around the state;
- Officials in Ohio led an in-person outreach and education event at a library;
- Officials in Wisconsin hosted a series of webinars for homeowners to learn more about septic systems and how to avoid damage and costly repairs.

This bill will promote septic awareness in alignment with national and state initiatives. Increased awareness of septic system usage and care improves efficiency in water usage, proper disposal of hazardous materials, and proper care of drains to avoid costly repairs. Ultimately, HB 834 will aid in ensuring clean water and a cleaner environment for Marylanders.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 834.



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Uploaded by: William Castelli

Position: FAV



House Bill 834- Septic Awareness Act of 2022

Position: Favorable

Maryland REALTORS® believe adding Maryland to the National Septic Smart Week is a positive tool to educate current and future property owners whose property uses onsite sewage disposal systems (septic systems). Failure to maintain and service a home's septic system correctly can lead to expensive homeowner repairs.

HB 834 also requires a purchaser of residential real estate to be notified about the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) toolkit on septic outreach. The toolkit provides a simple explanation of actions to take and avoid when living in a property with a septic system. The toolkit contains simple information that can be posted near toilets or sinks as well as more detailed information for owners to review. A snapshot of one of the EPA brochures is on the following page.

The REALTORS® supported amendments in the House (which were accepted) to simplify and make the disclosure more similar to disclosures that currently exist regarding septic systems. We encourage the Senate to support the bill as presented today.

For more information, contact

bill.castelli@mdrealtor.org, susan.mitchell@mdrealtor.org,

lisa.may@mdrealtor.org or theresa.kuhns@mdrealtor.org

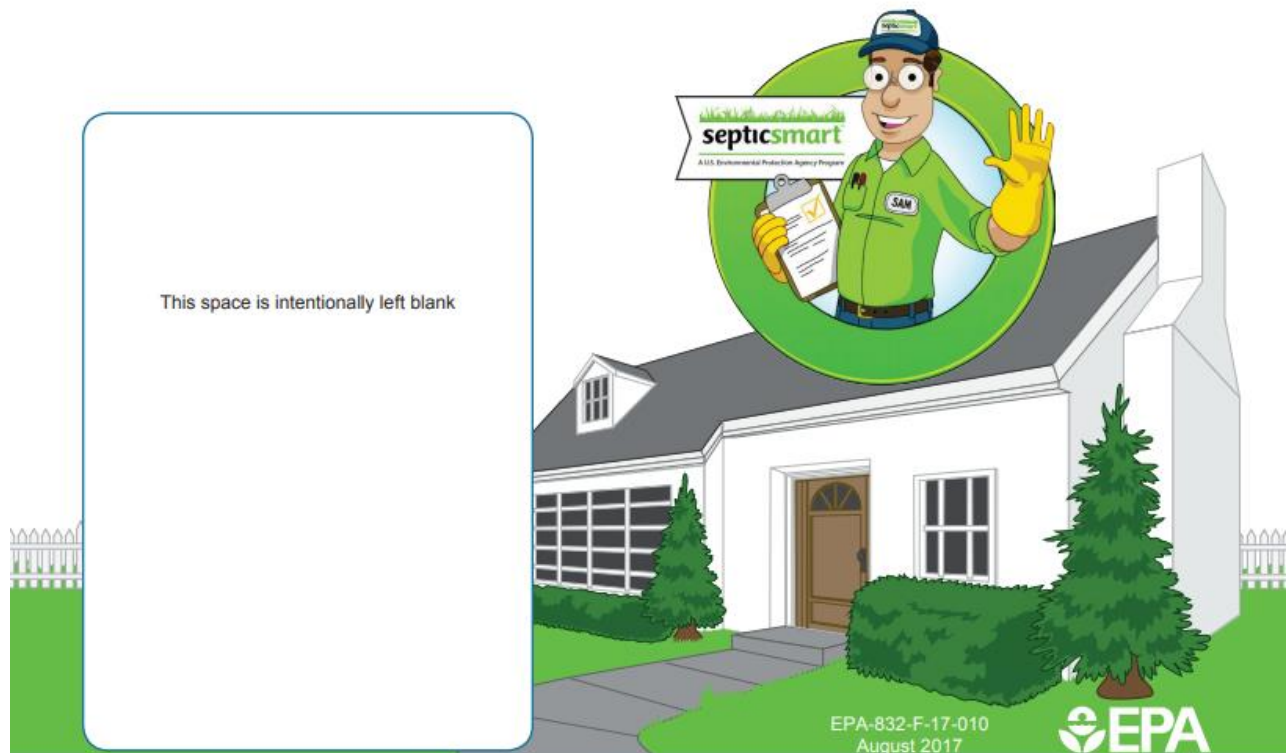
New Homebuyer's Guide to Septic Systems

If you are about to purchase a new home with a septic system, this homebuyer guide is for you!

This guide provides information homebuyers need to know before purchasing a home with a septic system (also known as an onsite wastewater system), how a septic system works, and the importance of having it inspected prior to purchasing a home. In addition, this guide provides information on everyday, preventative, and corrective maintenance for when you are living in your new home.

For additional information, contact your local health department, real estate agent or visit www.epa.gov/septic.

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EPA-832-F-17-010
August 2017

