



SEPTIC SYSTEM CARE BEGINS WITH YOU

On-site Septic System Maintenance in the Eld Inlet Watershed

Water quality is affected by on-site septic systems throughout Thurston County. The goal of this project is to encourage people that live in the Eld Inlet Watershed to care for and maintain their on-site septic systems with annual inspections and pumping as needed.

While water quality in Eld Inlet currently meets standards, it is declining. Some areas are considered threatened, meaning they're close to failing water quality standards needed to harvest shellfish. If shellfish harvesting is limited, a marine recovery area will be designated and these suggestions will no longer be voluntary. We are evaluating whether education and outreach can offset the need for septic system operation and maintenance regulations.

Project Components:

This project is designed to educate people with on-site septic systems who live in the Eld Inlet Watershed about the importance of regular septic inspections for catching problems while they're small and to get their tanks pumped as needed.

We are mailing information to about 1,345 households that our current records show are served by an on-site septic system within the Eld Inlet Watershed and have not had their systems inspected or pumped within the last six years. Letters include reminders about how to care for and maintain on-site septic systems, how to access septic system records on-line and includes a list of classes available to learn how to self-inspect their own septic systems.

Facebook ads are reaching out to residents of the Eld Inlet Watershed to share these same messages.

Environmental health staff are hosting classes for people in the Eld Inlet Watershed to learn how to inspect their on-site septic systems themselves and how to report that information to Thurston County Public Health.

Riser rebates are offered for people that either inspect their on-site septic systems or pay a professional to inspect their system **and** report that information to online [RME](#) or Environmental Health staff.

Staff contacts

Jennifer Johnson, Education and Outreach Specialist with Thurston County Public Health is leading the education efforts and can be reached at 360-867-2577 or johnsoj@co.thurston.wa.us