

# **Building a Regional Partnership to Address Septic System Impacts to Lake Michigan**

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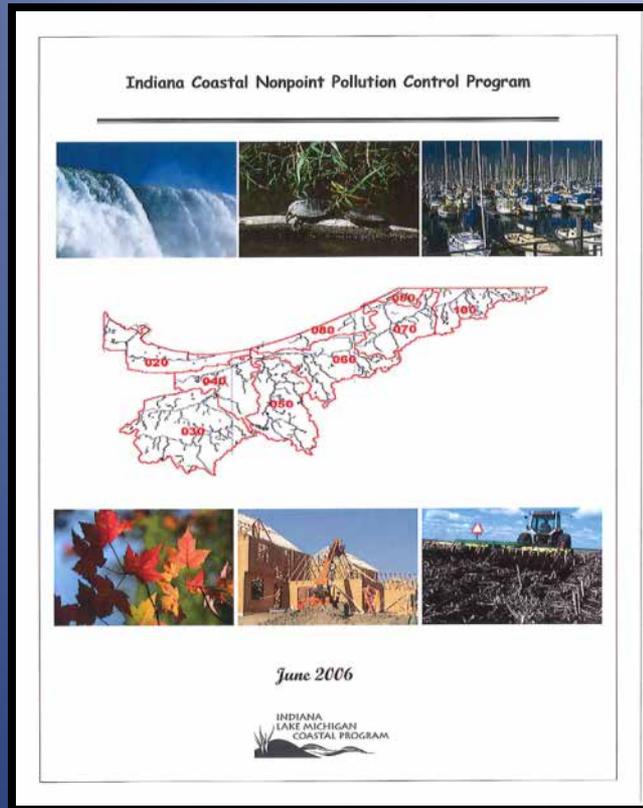
**9<sup>th</sup> Biennial State of Lake Michigan/15<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Lake Beach Association  
Joint Conference - Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, Michigan  
October 29, 2015**

# Overview

- Background
  - Federal Mandates
  - Issue Scope
  - Prior Work
- Current Work
  - State – Work Group
  - Partner Initiatives
- Summary



# Indiana Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program



**Purpose :** To develop and implement management measures for nonpoint source pollution to restore and protect coastal waters...

This will be accomplished by coordinating efforts with identified partners and utilizing existing programs, laws, and statutes.

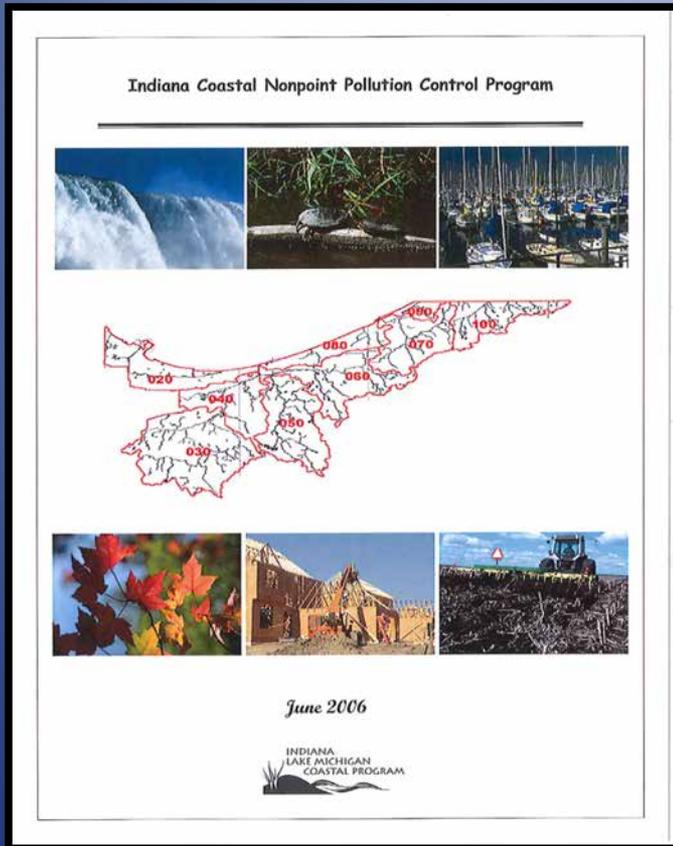
As part of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 (CZARA), Congress created a stand-alone provision, Section 6217, which requires that states and territories with approved coastal zone management programs develop a coastal nonpoint source pollution control program to address water quality impairment of coastal waters.

# Indiana Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program

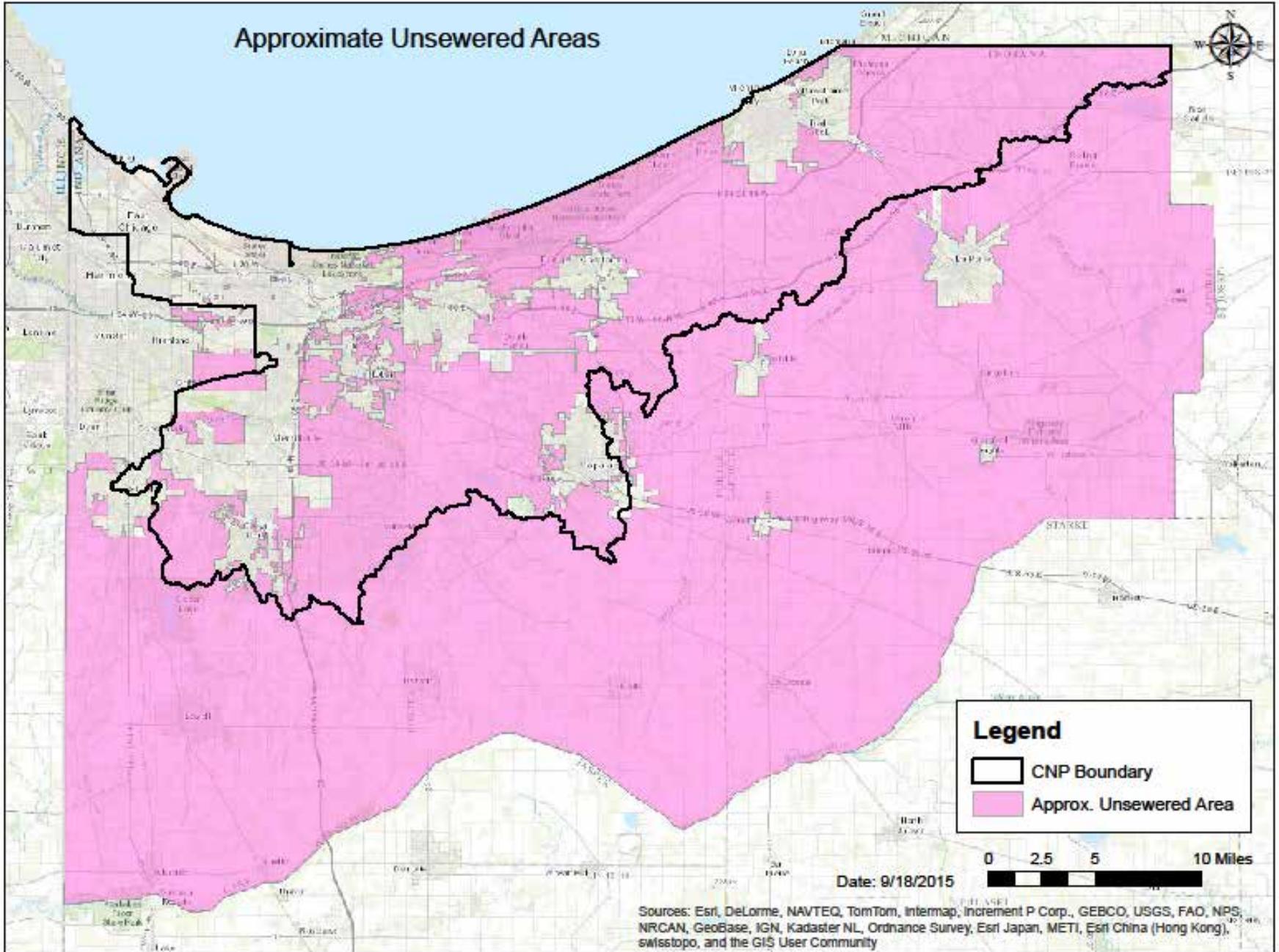
Onsite Disposal System (Septic System) Management Measures are included in the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program

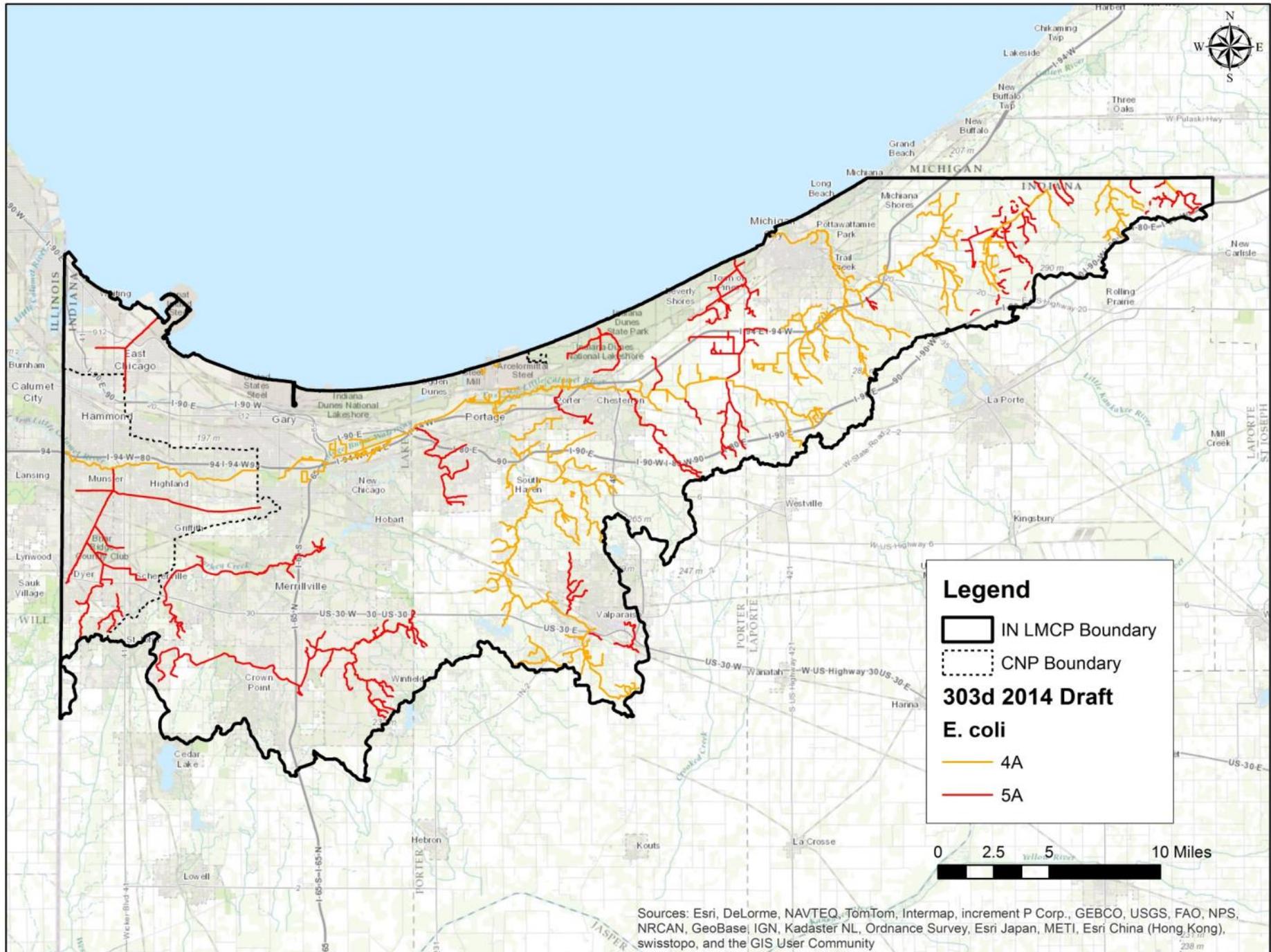
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) determine if states have met all the measures in the Coastal Nonpoint Program

- Indiana has not yet met the measure for ensuring that Operating Septic Systems are inspected at a frequency adequate to ascertain whether the system is failing.



# Approximate Unsewered Areas







# Indiana State Department of Health

Welcome **Mike Mettler!** [ [Log Off](#) ]

## The Wastewater Information System Tool

- Home
- Parcel
- Complaint
- Admin

### Parcel Information

[Back to Parcel List](#)

Parcel Control Id: 2

#### Property Details

Request Number*	<input type="text" value="00123JAW"/>	Created Date	8/7/2009
Township Name*	<input type="text" value="Clearspring"/>	Last Updated Date	8/25/2009
County*	<input type="text" value="Lagrange"/>		

#### Legal Description

Township #*	<input type="text" value="7"/>	<input type="text" value="South"/>	Range *	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text" value="East"/>
Section*	<input type="text" value="15"/>		Subdivision	<input type="text"/>	
Lot Number	<input type="text" value="34,45"/>		Parcel Number	<input type="text" value="123-345-567-2344"/>	
Parcel or Lot Size	<input type="text" value="40000"/>	<input type="text" value="Square Feet"/>	Zoning Classification	<input type="text" value="45"/>	
Location Description	<input type="text" value="3 miles NW of Wolcottville on Amish Hill Drive"/>				

# The NW Indiana Septic System Coordination Work Group

The NW Indiana SSC Work Group comprised of federal, state, and local governments/ agencies, not-for-profit groups, and interested individuals has been meeting since early 2013 to develop collaborative plans and implementation strategies to address the potential impacts of failing septic systems on local water quality and public health.

- IDEM
- USEPA
- Indiana State Dept. of Health
- County Health Depts.
- NIRPC
- Urban Waters Federal Partnership
- Coastal MS4s
- Coastal SWCDs
- Save the Dunes
- Sea Grant
- Coastal Communities
- Septic System Owners
- Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program

The Indiana DNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program provides staffing and coordination assistance for the Work Group as part of the Indiana Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program.

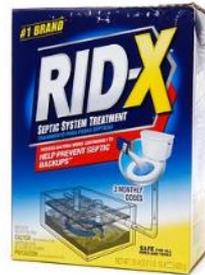
# The NW Indiana Septic System Coordination Work Group Action Agenda & Accomplishments 2015

- ✓ Watershed Mapping, Monitoring, and Database development to identify potential septic system impacts on local waterways updated in 2015.
- ✓ Coordination and information sharing between health departments and nonpoint source pollution programs and projects (319, Coastal, Watershed Groups, SWCDs, MS4s). MS4s have become a key partner for distributing septic system outreach materials to local communities because they have education and outreach measures in place as part of their program requirements.
- ✓ Innovative approaches and funding to address failing septic systems.
  - State Revolving Loan Funds, Federal Appropriations, MS4s.

# The NW Indiana Septic System Coordination Work Group Action Agenda & Accomplishments 2015

- ✓ Bi-monthly meetings with partners for project/program updates, discussion, and educational presentations.
- ✓ Focus Groups – Septic System operation and maintenance awareness in the Coastal Region.
  - Septic System Awareness Focus Groups and Surveys developed by NW Indiana Urban Waters Partnership conducted in three Lake Michigan watershed counties in 2014/2015 to determine knowledge base of septic system owners concerning how their septic system works, their maintenance practices, and who they contact and trust for assistance and information.
  - The Focus Groups were also designed to determine owner preferences for septic system information style and mode of communication.
  - Based on Focus Group final analysis, the Septic System Coordination Work Group will develop Coastal Septic System outreach and education program to be funded through the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program.

*Teaser: What is popping up on people's minds so far?*



\* This is not the solution

# ISDH Efforts

- Rule
  - Set Backs
  - Operating Permits
- Model Ordinance
  - Installers
  - Point of Sale
- Training
  - iTOSS
  - State Board of Realtors – C.E.U.s

# Set Backs

## Indiana Requirement

- 200 ft. – public water supply
- 50 – 200 ft. – advanced treatment
- Other States?







# County Efforts

## LaPorte County

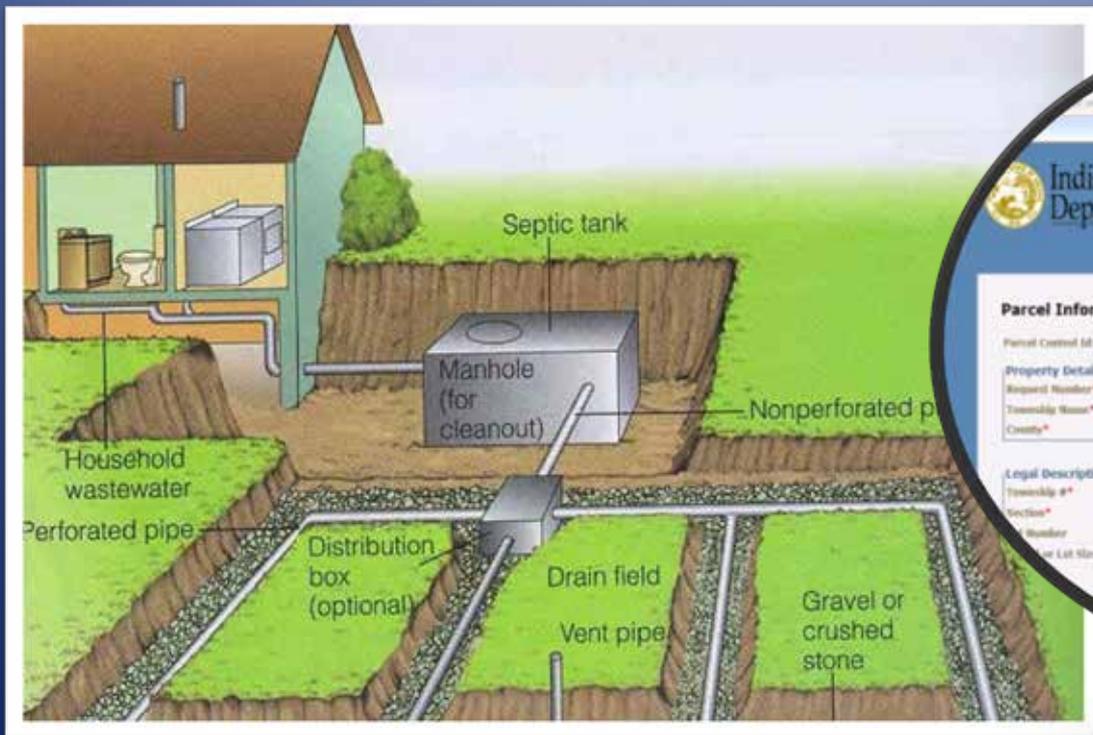
- Early adopter iTOSS
- Operating Permit Program
  - All permits for new and repair
  - Businesses changing ownership
- Point of Sale Inspection
  - Septics & Wells
  - January 1, 2016

## Porter County

- Data uploadable iTOSS
- Point of Sale Inspection
  - Not Yet
- Watershed Items
  - Portage – subdivision tie to sewer
  - Pines – investigation on septics
  - Improved standards for new septics & repairs

# Operating Septic System Inspection Program

- Work with local partners and Communities
- Conduct Focus Groups
  - Septic Owners
  - Decision-Makers
  - Realtors
- Map Septic Areas/Promote Database
- Promote SepticSmart Program



# Support and Promote EPA SepticSmart Week September 21 – 25, 2015 at the State and Local level.



43 participating governments, agencies, organizations and individuals distributed the 3,500 EPA SepticSmart education brochures during SepticSmart Week and provided links to the EPA SepticSmart web page with the message that regular care and maintenance of septic systems can prevent failure.

- Newspaper, Radio, Television
- Web, Facebook, Blogging
- Mailings, Outdoor Banners
- Outreach to Septic Haulers
- Presentations
- Resolutions & Proclamations

**RESOLUTION 15-24**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION IN  
SUPPORT OF THE 2015 SEPTICSMART WEEK.**

September 17, 2015

**WHEREAS:** Throughout NW Indiana, many communities rely on Septic Systems, or Onsite Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems, to dispose of wastewater from their homes and businesses; and

**WHEREAS:** Septic Systems can fail or malfunction polluting our lands and waterways causing public health hazards and natural resource degradation; and

**WHEREAS:** Educating home and business Septic System owners about the need for periodic inspection, maintenance and proper daily use can result in the highest possible standard of safe, sanitary and environmentally sound onsite wastewater service.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby proclaims September 21-25, 2015 to be **SEPTICSMART WEEK** in Northwest Indiana and encourage all residents and businesses to join in this observance.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2015.

  
Chairperson

  
Robert J. Schaefer  
Secretary



# Questions?



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