

Groundwater Identification on Our Barrier Islands

The issue of identifying groundwater on Bolivar Peninsula and Galveston Island has reached a point at which the Health District must change its On-Site Sewage Facility (OSSF) inspection procedures. Recent experiences have brought to light differences of opinion as to where groundwater levels are set. Misidentification of groundwater can lead to the improper treatment of wastewater before it enters these ground waters and may lead to failures of the OSSF.

In order to better address this issue, we are proposing for Health District inspectors to conduct a soil evaluation for each subsurface OSSF installation on the Peninsula and the Island. A fee of **\$64.00** would be assessed to cover the additional expense of conducting these evaluations. The homeowner has one of two options as described below:

- Option 1 – The homeowner or his or her agent notifies District of the date of their independent soil evaluation. The independent evaluator along with District inspector assesses the soils concurrently to assure an accurate evaluation prior to the submittal of the OSSF planning documents and application. Any disagreements and/or discrepancies should be identified and resolved at this time. Once resolved, the planning documents and application can be submitted with a greater chance for approval. Cost of evaluation: \$64.00
- Option 2 – The homeowner or his or her agent conducts the soil evaluation without the presence of the District inspector. Following submittal of the OSSF planning documents, the District inspector would conduct our soil evaluation. Any disagreements or discrepancies between these two evaluations may lead to delays in plan approval or total disapproval. Cost of the evaluation: \$64.00

The soil evaluation fee is in addition to the normal application fee required to process OSSF applications that range from \$200 to \$400.