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Subsurface Permit Surcharge

Section FFFF of the recently passed budget bill (PL 2009, ch. 213) requires municipalities to assess a \$15.00 surcharge to all non-engineered subsurface wastewater system permits, and to remit this money to become part of the **Water Quality Improvement Fund**, within the Department of Environmental Protection. According to Andrew Fisk, Bureau Director, Land & Water Quality, MDEP the purpose of the Fund is to improve and protect water quality to reduce impacts on shellfish growing areas. The Fund will allow the hiring of three staff in the shellfish area program at the Department of Marine Resources. The fund will also be used to improve the State's wastewater infrastructure, remove licensed overboard discharges, abate pollution from failed subsurface wastewater disposal systems, and improve the identification of pollution in shellfish harvesting areas. Revenue for the Fund will come from several sources including fees on certain municipal wastewater treatment facilities and combined sewer overflows.

This surcharge would apply to all non-engineered full systems, whether a first time, replacement, or expansion; but not to components such as a tank-only replacement. Note that this surcharge does not reduce or increase the basic **\$100.00** subsurface system permit charge, nor does it impact any local fees set by ordinance. Municipalities are still required to submit **25%** of the minimum permit fee to the Department of Health and Human Services for all internal and subsurface permits. **The \$15.00 surcharge will need to be accounted for separately and should be submitted to the Department as a separate check, for forwarding to the MDEP for processing.** We recommend you begin collecting the surcharge as soon as possible; it is not necessary to seek a surcharge payment from individuals you have already permitted in July 2009.

We encourage all municipalities to submit both the **25%** state share of the permit fees and the **\$15.00** subsurface system surcharge on a monthly basis. If your level of permit activity supports a less frequent submittal, we would prefer to hear from you at least once a quarter. All checks need to be made payable to the "**Treasurer of State**". The surcharge check should indicate the number of subsurface system permits covered, and specify "**Water Quality Surcharge**" either through a notation on the check, check stub, or a separate document. All submittals, financial or otherwise should be sent to:

**Division of Environmental Health
Subsurface Wastewater Program
11 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0011**