SAN JUAN COUNTY POLLUTION PREVENTION
Ensuring that On-Site Sewage Systems (OSS) in our most sensitive areas are not contributing to water quality pollution.

WHAT WE ARE DOING
Ensuring that OSS are operating optimally and being maintained and repaired when needed. This project focuses on OSS and other sources of bacterial pollution near shellfish growing areas. In these areas, we notified owners of overdue inspections; offered financial incentives to reimburse for cost of inspection, tank pumping, and adding risers/inspection ports; ensured that failing OSS are repaired; and completed a shoreline survey near a shellfish growing area that is currently listed as Concerned based on fecal coliform monitoring results.

WHAT WE FOUND
We mailed over 10,000 notices to property owners Countywide over the course of a two year time period. As a result of these notices, half of the OSS in our Sensitive Areas were inspected. There were four OSS that were identified as failing and were subsequently repaired. In addition, a confined animal enclosure near a stream that directly discharged to a bay where shellfish growing occurs was found. The animals were moved as well as the manure, which corrected the pollution source.

WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT
When OSS are inspected on a routine basis, maintenance needed can be identified and completed prior to system failure. When OSS fail, they can threaten public health by contaminating surface and groundwater and can also threaten marine water used for recreation and shellfish growing.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
All OSS in San Juan County must be inspected routinely, and a report submitted to our Department. Gravity systems must be inspected once every 3 years, and all other systems require an annual inspection. You can hire a licensed wastewater inspector to complete an inspection of your system.

WHO WE ARE
San Juan County Health and Community Services is a local health jurisdiction that provides services to a year round population of approximately 16,000 residents. We are also unique in that we are a County consisting of entirely islands with over 400 miles of shoreline. There are 7 commercial shellfish growing areas in our County totaling approximately 2040 acres. Our marine water quality as documented in our shellfish growing areas is very good, and our goal is to maintain an OSS Operation & Maintenance program that ensures fecal coliform pollution from OSS do not threaten public health or cause a downgrade of shellfish growing areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
San Juan County Health & Community Services
www.sanjuanco.com/436/On Site Sewage Program
360 378-4474