An Overview of The Rhode Island Wastewater Information System (RIWIS)

State, Municipal and Private Sector Perspectives

Justin Jobin, Environmental Scientist, The Town of Jamestown
Common Questions

1. What are the benefits of web-based tracking program?
2. How does a “sponsorship program” work?
3. How is RIWIS a State program?
4. How can my community benefit from RIWIS?
Benefits of a Web-Based Tracking Program

- Access from any internet connection
- Password protected
- Secure with daily back-up
- Easy to link with other databases and GIS
- Enhances coordination among service providers, communities, and the state
- Facilitates inter-agency communication
Capable of Tracking:

- Inspection and compliance information
- Permit information
- NOV’s and correspondence
- Cesspool phase out
- Maintenance of enhanced treatment systems
- Pump-out records
- Commercial, large and high flow systems
- Alternative and innovative systems with multiple components in treatment train
- Sampling / monitoring results and analyses
Other Municipal Capabilities:

- Pavement Management Program
- Harbor / Mooring Permit Database
- Online Permitting
- CEU Tracking
- GIS Compatibility
- & More
Automatic Inventory and Notification Services

- Systems needing inspections
- Overdue inspections
- Systems that failed inspection
- Systems needing repair or maintenance
RIWIS Sponsorship Program

- RIWIS is now funded by industry sponsors.
- Provided free to URI, RIDEM, other state agencies, and RI communities.
- Represents a substantial cost savings to communities.
Advertisements will be kept on the “login” page only and will not interfere with users or function of the system. There will be no pop-ups or flash banners.

The sponsors will not have access to the database, unless they are also a local service provider, in which case they would have access to only their client’s information.
How is RIWIS A State Program?

- Often confused w/ DEM Program
- RIWIS is a state program in the sense that it unites all sectors of RI wastewater management
- URI and Carmody have developed a simple, standardized format that is Plug-n-Play compatible for all RI Communities.
- Each sector / user will essentially have their own database
RI WIS: THE BIG PICTURE

RI DEM

Real Estate Agents

Property Owners

Service Providers

Sponsors

URI

Education & Outreach

Communities
RI DEM’S ROLE

- Will make ISDS Permit & Application data available to participating communities.
- This data will provide a barebones “state” database.
- Provide periodic updates to RIWIS.
- Access to this information allows communities to start building wwm program before adopting ordinances.
- May use RIWIS to track performance of large systems subject to DEM permit requirements.
URI’S ROLE

- Worked with Carmody on RIWIS concept
- With towns, developed “management blocks” to ease community WWM
- Worked with RIDEM to acquire permit database
- May use monitoring data to research and evaluate system performance in future.
- Provide regular training and technical support to RIWIS users
Service Provider Benefits

- Consistent Reporting for All Communities
- One Username & Password
- Free Management Program
  - Can Track When Clients are due for service
  - Notify Communities when client doesn’t renew contract
  - Instant access to client information
  - Secure & Password Protected
  - Different levels of access keep private information safe, while automatically reporting required information to state and communities
Community Benefits

- Consistent with other towns
- Easy access to state information
- Flexibility!
- Pre-set inspection reports, fact sheets, and letters that communities can use & edit with specific town requirements
- Essentially FREE ($100 a year membership)
Summary

RIWIS is an inexpensive but powerful management program that provides service providers and communities with their own database, that has access to RIDEM data, and is compatible with town-tested “management blocks”
Are there any questions?
There is a recognized need for a state-wide computerized wastewater information management system.

There is an urgent need for state-wide tracking of performance and operation and maintenance of large flow and I&A systems.

Several RI communities are using Carmody Data Systems, 2 towns having switched to this system after considerable investment in other conventional tracking programs.
In December of 2005, OWT Center applied for a CELS CARES grant - to develop a standardized state-wide information system for onsite systems.

Several communities and non-government organizations wrote strong letters in support of the project.

Unfortunately, grant was not awarded for this project.

However, interest was still strong to find other ways to fund the project.
Moving Forward: Sponsorship Program

- Idea of a RIWIS Sponsorship Program was presented to URI.
- RIWIS would be funded by industry sponsors and provided free of charge to URI, RIDEM, other state agencies, and Rhode Island Communities.
- Representing a substantial cost savings to communities.