

**New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Supply**

Report on East of Hudson Septic Repair Program Funding

March 2022

*Prepared in accordance with Section 4.9 of the NYSDOH
2017 Filtration Avoidance Determination*



Prepared by: DEP, Bureau of Water Supply

Background

The 2017 Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) requires the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to review and report on the adequacy of funding for the East of Hudson (EOH) Septic System Rehabilitation Reimbursement Program (Program); this Program was established pursuant to the Revised 2007 FAD and is intended to reimburse homeowners a portion of the costs to repair or remediate eligible failing septic systems, or to connect those systems to existing sewage collection systems.

The New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) administers the Program with funding provided by DEP. The Program is available to eligible property owners in priority areas within the West Branch, Boyd Corners, Cross River, Croton Falls, and upstream, hydrologically connected reservoir basins. It is worth noting that in 2023, DEP's contractual relationship with EFC concludes, so DEP is currently making plans to directly manage and implement the Program once EFC's involvement ends.

Existing Structure and Participation

As with other septic repair programs funded by DEP, participation in the EOH Program is voluntary. At Program initiation, DEP notified key staff from local municipalities, including town supervisors and planning departments. DEP also notified and discussed the Program with regulatory staff from county health departments in Westchester, Putnam, and Dutchess counties. The purpose of this outreach was to inform local officials about the existence of the Program, provide copies of relevant documents, and answer questions. In 2018, DEP reviewed the strategies used to inform potential participants of the Program's availability and undertook additional outreach to local municipal staff and key regulatory personnel at county health departments to enhance participation. DEP also placed flyers in town halls, libraries and other public locations, and worked with local municipalities to share information on town websites.

DEP uses GIS data and local tax parcel records to identify all parcels eligible for the Program, while EFC sends direct mailers to eligible properties annually that include a brief program description and contact information. EFC fields all inquiries and assists residents during the repair and reimbursement process.

Between 2015 and 2021, EFC issued reimbursement to 40 property owners in the West Branch, Boyd Corners, Cross River, Croton Falls, and upstream, hydrologically connected reservoir basins. DEP's total reimbursement for these 40 projects was \$240,293, while EFC's administrative costs for the Program totaled \$91,997.

Other Septic Repair Programs in the EOH Watershed

In addition to the FAD-mandated EOH Septic Program, there are other septic reimbursement programs in the EOH Watershed. The Westchester County Planning Department administers a program using \$3.5 million in DEP funding provided through the 1997 NYC Watershed Memorandum of Agreement; this program is available to residential and commercial property owners in areas of the EOH Watershed not covered by other septic repair programs. For residential properties, the program provides grants between 25% to 100% of eligible repair costs. Additional information can be found [here](#).

New York State also funds septic repairs in portions of the EOH Watershed through its Septic System Replacement Fund that was established by the 2017 Clean Water Infrastructure Act. This program is administered by EFC and implemented through county health departments; it provides 50% of eligible costs up to \$10,000 to homeowners within 250 feet of the following Priority Geographic Areas in Westchester and Putnam counties:

1. Truesdale Lake #1302-0054,
2. Palmer Lake #1302-0103, and
3. East Branch Croton, Middle, and Tribes #1302-0055.

Additional information on the New York State septic repair program can be found [here](#).

Funding

As previously noted, EFC issued 40 reimbursements totaling \$240,293 during the period 2015-2021. This equates to an average of 5.7 repairs per year and an average reimbursement of approximately \$6,000 per repair.

Based on these historical averages, DEP estimates that the required annual funding is approximately \$34,200, or a total of approximately \$171,000 for the remaining FAD term (2022-2027). If the Program were to fund at least 35 repairs annually as stipulated in the 2017 FAD, DEP estimates that required annual funding would be \$210,000 or approximately \$1.05 million for the remaining five-year FAD term. DEP will continue to fund the Program to meet historical demand and is committed to ensure adequate funding is available for up to 35 repairs per year should future participation in the Program increase beyond historical levels.