

January 2010

Southeast RCAP Board of
Directors Meeting

Progress in North Carolina

NCRCAP: A Contractor for Southeast
Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc.



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Statistics in North Carolina

USDA Technitrain
5 projects

OCS
3 projects

EPA Wastewater
1 project

EPA Drinking Water
1 project

NCRCAP Recommends Policy Change for Chatham County Board of Health

Healthy Homes for All program staff, Marcia Perritt and Margaret Wurth, presented to the Chatham County Board of Health in late October. Marcia and Margaret reported on NCRCAP's recent collaboration with the Health Department to educate local healthcare providers on blood lead screening guidelines and the latest research on the deleterious effects of low levels of lead exposure on childrens' developing brains. NCRCAP's Healthy Homes for All program staff has worked assiduously with community partners since 2003 to educate parents about environmental health hazards in the home. Recognizing a need for more targeted education to the medical community as well as to families with young children, NCRCAP intensified outreach efforts to the healthcare providers in 2009 with support from OCS.

During the Board of Health presentation, Marcia and Margaret recommended proactive, comprehensive lead screening policies instituted by neighboring North Carolina counties. These policies would ensure that children who are exposed to low levels of lead receive medical and educational interventions in order to prevent further exposure. Currently in Chatham County, children are only considered to have an elevated blood lead level that requires medical intervention when their blood lead level is 10 micrograms per deciliter or greater, despite overwhelming scientific evidence of the adverse affects of lead on the brain at blood lead levels as low as 2 micrograms per deciliter. The Chair of the Board of Health agreed that a more comprehensive policy approach was needed and will investigate alternative policy options in spring 2010. NCRCAP will continue educating the medical community on the harmful effects of low levels of lead and looks forward to a continued partnership with the Chatham County Board of Health.

Great News From Maple Hill

NCRCAP was excited to learn that after a few years of uncertainty with the Clean Water Management Trust Fund application they helped prepare, Maple Hill was finally awarded the funds needed to begin work on their Wastewater Project. Congratulations!

NCRCAP's First Ever Exhibit Booth at the North Carolina American Water Works Association Annual Conference was a Success

For the first time NCRCAP was an exhibitor at the North Carolina American Water Works Association Annual (NC AWWA) Conference. Although NCRCAP has attended the NC AWWA Conference for a number of years, this was the first time NCRCAP staffed an exhibit booth. At the booth were a variety of promotional information that was distributed, but also samples of successful grants written by NCRCAP were available for viewing. "It was important for us that engineers know who writes grants in the rural communities they work in," says Peter Kittany, executive director of NCRCAP. "Once a municipality is awarded the grant the engineer typically never knows who prepared the application. By showing engineers our successful grant applications, it lets them know we are not their competition, but in fact, able to be a positive liaison between their firm and the community."

At the exhibit, NCRCAP staff Peter Kittany and Marshall Yandle explained the variety of services offered to rural and low income communities in North Carolina. In addition to the many engineers, NCRCAP spoke to a variety of individuals in state and local government. Yandle said, "Not only did engineers from private firms approach us about our services, we also spoke to municipal public works staff and state government officials from several agencies."

Due to the positive feedback received, NCRCAP will consider including an exhibit at the annual NC AWWA conference in the years to come as a part of our annual circuit of conferences the organization attends.

Hollister: One Step Closer

NCRCAP learned from a previous feasibility study completed early this summer that all practical options for a wastewater treatment system were too expensive to implement or maintain in the Hollister community. This has led stakeholders down a new avenue of pursuing onsite decentralized cluster systems. "One of the best parts of implementing a system like this is that it doesn't have to be done all at once. It can be done in phases with each phase consisting of a few clusters of 5-10 homes. This not only will be easier to finance, but will also allow whoever maintains it to gradually take on greater responsibility," says Marshall Yandle, Community Resource Coordinator at NCRCAP.

With the help of Hollister R.E.A.C.H., the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, Halifax County, Tetra Tech, and others, NCRCAP submitted a planning grant to the NC Rural Center in October. This grant will help fund a soil analysis and design work of the regional cluster system. Yandle said, "It was important to have the first study done to eliminate the more practical options. We can't go to funders and request support of a more innovative system without being able to prove the more common systems aren't feasible." NCRCAP will continue to work with the community in order to help see their dreams of a having a functional wastewater system come true.