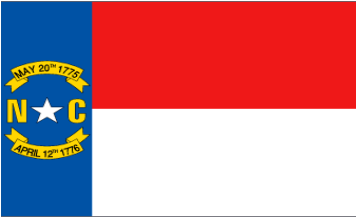


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Southeast RCAP Board of  
Directors Meeting

# Progress in North Carolina

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



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## Statistics in North Carolina

### Technitrain

8 current projects/3 in development  
5 Board Trainings planned

### EPA Wastewater

3 projects  
1 workshop planned

### EPA Safe Drinking Water

2 projects  
1 workshop planned

### OCS

4 current projects/1 in development  
1 Board Training planned

## Recent Project Highlights in North Carolina

### Planning for Wastewater Reuse in Jackson Hamlet: the Potential for Community-Driven Economic Development

NCRCAP TAP Bob Taylor worked with Jackson Hamlet Community Action (JHCA) to secure \$12,000 in grant funds for engineering services. JHCA has chosen to work with an engineering firm with expertise in decentralized wastewater treatment and water reuse to produce a preliminary engineering report. JHCA's goal is to outline community-wide wastewater options and related entrepreneurial opportunities. A specific option to be investigated will be

to produce treated wastewater for industrial reuse. Numerous golf courses in the adjacent community of PineHurst and an industrial park are potential markets and the study will include an evaluation of their need for reuse quality water.

This long term partnership between NCRCAP and Jackson Hamlet has resulted in the community coming out of the shadow of its wealthier neighbors, PineHurst and Aberdeen, and stepping up to lead the process in determining how to meet their need for better wastewater services as well as creating a potential source of economic development.

NCRCAP will continue to have a strong role in this effort by planning training on wastewater technologies for community members in Jackson Hamlet, assisting with evaluating the engineering report, and identifying resources for financing the system construction.

*Jackson Hamlet Community Action members during strategic planning meeting. Photo by NCRCAP*



### Lending a Helping Hand in Western NC

The Western Carolina Septic Repair Project grew out of NCRCAP's previous work with county-wide survey projects throughout western NC. TAP Rich Holder worked with other partners to identify wastewater straight-pipes and failing septic systems in Madison, Buncombe, and other counties. Subsequent to the surveys Rich and other partners worked with low income households to find viable technical and financial resources to correct these problems. A strategy was needed to address some of the most severe wastewater problems for households without financial resources and living on sites with not easily accessed by conventional machinery. To meet this need, Rich spearheaded an effort to have eager volunteers hand dig the trenches, pit, and holes needed for installing septic system components.



*Volunteer crew with homeowner (second from left) next to pump tank hole. Photo by NCRCAP*

*(Continued from page 1)*

Rich Holder, who is also a registered sanitarian, oversees the permitting and installation of each septic system and works very closely with the volunteers completing the labor. Rich anticipates working with volunteer groups to hand dig three or more septic repairs a year to repair failing systems and eliminate straight-pipes in western North Carolina counties. In the last quarter of the 2005-2006 program year, Rich supervised the installation of a septic system for a home referred to the program from the Land of Sky Council of Governments (LOS). The family was awarded a grant to have their current home replaced with a mobile home by the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium. The grant budget, however, could not pay for a septic system, even though untreated sewage was flowing under the home. Rich designed a new pump system and contacted the Emanuel Lutheran Appalachian Service volunteers to alert them of the potential project and inquire if they could hand dig and install the system. They agreed and spent a week of almost continuous digging. Once the septic work was complete this enabled the other project partners to complete the work necessary to replace the family's dilapidated home with a new mobile home. Rich inspected the final plumbing work that connected the home to the new septic system and the family was able to move into their home before the 2006 holidays.



*Ms. Roberts in front of her new home. Photo by NCRCAP*

Rich continues to work recruiting volunteer groups, evaluating potential households to work with, and coming up with a timeframe with which to plan on the installation of two or more septic systems over the remainder of the program year.

### **NCRCAP's Safe Housing Initiative Highlighted in Article**

With the completion of NCRCAP's two most recent bathroom additions in the Fall of 2006, the Chatham News and Record spoke with NCRCAP's Executive Director, Peter Kittany, and other project partners about the accomplishments of the Safe Housing Initiative.

Through the Safe Housing Initiative (SHI) program, NCRCAP works to eliminate health and safety hazards, especially those posed by the lack of indoor plumbing. NCRCAP's Safe Housing Initiative began in 1998 when we built our first bathroom using volunteers and accessed housing assistance funds that were awarded to Chatham County for another eight households (four of these households also relied on outhouses). Since then, we've worked with a total of nearly 70 households. Working with volunteers and our partners at Central Carolina Community College (CCC) and Joint Orange Chatham Community Action (JOCCA), we've built bathrooms for eleven of these 70 households. The bathrooms are built primarily by high school students enrolled in a program through JOCCA.

In the recent article Peter Kittany explains, "The homeowners we work with in the SHI program are extremely low income, and the vast majority are elderly or disabled. Yet each day they still must face getting by without some of the most basic necessities that most of us take for granted, such as indoor plumbing. For many of the luckier residents in the county, it often comes as a shock to find out we still have neighbors that live in conditions of such severe



poverty. Having to haul water for drinking or bathing and still use outhouses."

Commenting on the value of the program to the students who complete the construction of the bathroom units, Morris Casper, the construction instructor from CCC states, "I had some kids who got really excited. They really didn't have any background in construction skills. To start and finish something was pretty amazing to some of them."

NCRCAP has funding to work with an additional six households in the 2006-2007 program year and has applied for funding that would allow the organization to work with another 30 households through 2008.