

Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission Grant Funds Available to Qualified Homeowners for Well and Septic System Repair or Replacement

Saluda, Virginia — Low-income homeowners who live on the Middle Peninsula might be eligible to receive financial assistance to repair or replace their well and septic systems thanks to available grant funding administered by the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC).

The MPPDC allocation of \$195,000 for these efforts comes as part of the Commonwealth's funding from the American Rescue Plan Act. Qualified applicants are eligible for a 100% grant up to a soft cap of \$40,000. Projects that exceed that cost may require further review and approval by the Virginia Department of Health Septic and Well Assistance Program (SWAP).

Homeowners eligible for grant funds must be at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines. For a one-person household, that level is at or below \$27,180; for a 2-person household, that number is at or below \$36,420. Eligible income levels can be found on the Septic and Well Funding Assistance Owner Interest Form that must be completed prior to receiving funding approval.

"For many homeowners in our community, a septic system is often the most expensive thing they own, next to their home itself," said Lewie Lawrence, Executive Director of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission. "Providing grant funding to qualified homeowners in our community supports our residents while also contributing to the health, welfare and safety of residents on the Middle Peninsula."

SWAP funds *cannot* be used to make interior improvements to the home. They can be used for onsite sewage system installation and to cover costs for well replacements and connection to public water and any costs of testing of the new well as well as other associated costs related to that installation. Virginia Department of Health SWAP funds do not have a cap on the funds available per type of system.

SWAP covers the cost of the following:

- Repairing or replacing failing septic systems
- Replacing straight pipes and privies
- Installing conventional system repairs, alternative system repairs, or sewer connection
- Replacing inadequate private wells and drinking water supplies
- Properly abandoning unused wells
- Installing replacement wells or public water connections

For the purposes of SWAP, inadequate private drinking water supplies are considered any of the following:

- Replacement of a dry well
- Replacement of a well that is document to have an exceedances of a maximum contaminant level or other health standards
- Replacement of bored wells
- Replacement of wells installed prior to any regulatory requirements related to the Private Well Regulations established in 1990
- Replacement of a well in poor condition that is potentially under surface water influence
- Replacement of a well that is required to be abandoned in order to permit a sewage system repair under SWAP; or
- Replacement of a developed drinking water supply (e.g., spring or cistern) that is not a private well for an existing home
- Replacement of developed private drinking water supply when access to private drinking water is no longer available to an existing home.

Contractors who perform work must hold a Class A, B, or C Contractor's License from the Virginia Department of Professional or Occupational Regulation as well as additional certifications and qualifications. While the Planning District Commission is administering funds for the community, the Three Rivers Health District issues construction and operation permits for septic and well repairs.

Visit VDH's Septic and Well Assistance Program website at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/swap/> to learn more about eligibility and income requirements for SWAP funds. Contact information for Three Rivers Health District local health departments can be found at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/three-rivers/health-departments/>.

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