

Please Oppose SB 342, Alternative Treatment Septic Systems

The Problem:

- The original SB 342 was intended to improve the regulation of Alternative or Advanced Treatment (AT) Wastewater Systems.
- The substitute language passed by the Environment Committee does the opposite by severely restricting the use of these technologies, hurting housing and economic development in communities without sewers.

What are AT Systems?

- **AT systems** are technologies used to process the wastewater from homes and other buildings. They are used where sewers do not exist and traditional septic systems do not or should not be used (e.g., because of poor soils or not enough land area for a leach field).
- **AT systems** are used to both replace failed septic systems and facilitate new housing and economic development in areas without sewers.
- **AT systems are used successfully in many other states.** RI and MA have better regulations governing AT systems. Why not in CT?

AT System Regulations in CT:

- In CT, wastewater from all buildings is regulated by DEEP and DPH. DEEP handles larger systems, DPH smaller systems.
- The legislature told DPH to write regulations for small AT systems (5,000 gallons per day (gpd) or less, TEN YEARS AGO. When regs are adopted, jurisdiction over these small systems would transfer from DEEP to DPH. But DPH has yet to draft such regulations. Thus, all AT systems are still regulated by DEEP – where it is a daunting, if not impossible, hurdle to gain approvals.
- **SB 342 SHOULD** change the jurisdiction of small AT systems from 5,000 gpd to 7,500 gpd to match the change made last session for traditional septic systems.
- **SB 342 SHOULD** tell DPH to get the small AT system regulations done. Ten years is too long to ignore the legislature's directive.
- **And, SB 342 SHOULD** tell DEEP to improve its system of regulating these technologies.
- **We offered substitute language to accomplish these goals. It was not only ignored, the substitute makes CT's regulations even worse, putting us further behind neighboring states in our ability to promote housing and economic development.**

SUBSTITUTE SB 342 adopted by the Environment Committee is bad for CT:

- SB 342 now limits AT systems to only fixing failed septic systems and only if there's no further use of a property (*even if the technology would allow it*). That is, no homeowner can, for example, change a 2-bedroom cottage to a 3-bedroom, or no property owner can split off a lot for any other purpose. *This makes no sense.*
- Under SB 342, AT systems will not be permitted for new housing or economic development – thus, areas without sewers will be severely constrained in meeting their housing and economic development needs.

The substitute SB 342 is anti-housing, anti-economic development, and anti-property owner. And, it is unnecessary to protect the environment – Properly regulated, AT systems can facilitate housing and economic development, just as they do in many other states. Please do not push CT further behind in the economic race. Oppose SB 342.