

York poised to enforce septic pumping

Town involved in greater effort to keep Cape Neddick River clean

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YORK, Maine — The town is taking steps to strictly enforce its ordinance requiring property owners within the Cape Neddick River watershed to pump their septic systems every three years to help improve water quality in the river and at Cape Neddick Beach.

York's Community Development Department is sending letters next week to the estimated 100 property owners living within the upper portion of the watershed, informing them of the requirement, according to Steve Burns, the department's director.

Non-compliance could result in fines of \$100 a day, he said Wednesday at a meeting of the Cape Neddick River Association at the York Senior Center. The upper portion of the watershed includes homes near Boulter Pond, a water source for the Kittery Water District, and Chases Pond, which supplies York's water.

Property owners will be given until February to comply, Burns said.

Starting in late winter or early spring, letters will be sent to the estimated 1,000 property owners living within the lower portion of the watershed, Burns said. In the lower portion of the river, the requirement is to pump septic systems every five years.

The town is also notifying septic companies that enforcement is coming, Burns said.

The effort is being pushed by the York Water District, he said. Water monitoring has revealed elevated bacteria counts in the Cape Neddick River. As yet, the bacteria counts are not directly tied to septic systems, Burns said.

More than a dozen people, according to members of the Cape Neddick River Association, attended Wednesday's meeting to determine how to increase the river's health. Another public meeting is set for 6:30 p.m. Nov. 17, at the Senior Center. Association members are also expected to attend a future Board of Selectmen meeting to help increase awareness of the efforts.

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