

**STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING NONPOINT SOURCE
POLLUTION FROM INDIVIDUAL SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS
IN RHODE ISLAND**

by
Melanie Eugenie Shaw

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ABSTRACT

Individual Sewage Disposal Systems are a significant nonpoint source of pollution threatening water quality in Rhode Island. This study examines the origins of this problem and recommends a comprehensive strategy for addressing these conditions.

The primary factors causing the release of pollutants from ISDS are system neglect, inadequate system siting (including both soil type and depth to groundwater), inappropriate application rates, and technology choices. Recognizing this, strategies addressing each of these areas are proposed.

In order insure proper system maintenance, Waste Water Management Districts should be formed throughout Rhode Island. These districts would be responsible for implementing ISDS maintenance and inspection programs. In addition, Rhode Island's current ISDS Regulations must be amended to require adequate setback distances from water resource areas. Also recommended are: system inspections and upgrades at the time of real estate transfer; a ban on the sale of already illegal septic system additives; a building code amendment to prohibit the use of garbage disposals in homes served by ISDS; a lot merger program designed to reconfigure lots that have been subdivided in such a way as to be unsuitable for ISDS; and water conservation initiatives to be implemented by WWMDs in pollution prone ISDS areas.