



NEWS

From the Illinois Senate

State Senator Dave Koehler

For immediate release
May 31, 2008

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Koehler sponsored bill to help protect groundwater passes Illinois General Assembly

SPRINGFIELD – A bill sponsored by State Senator Dave Koehler (D-Peoria) designed to help protect the groundwater supply from contamination due to improperly maintained septic systems has passed the Illinois General Assembly. The bill will now go to the governor for approval.

Senate Bill 2034 says that local governments may require homeowners who maintain a private septic system to verify with that unit of local government once every three years that they have a valid contract with a licensed private sewage disposal system contractor. The legislation also states that no additional fee can be charged to the homeowner for proof of a contract.

“This bill was a compromise from a proposed yearly inspection, but with input from residents it was modified without compromising the intent of the legislation. According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, improperly maintained septic systems are the second greatest threat to groundwater supplies, just below underground storage tanks. It is estimated that ten to twenty percent of these systems are improperly cared for and are contributing to the groundwater pollution problems we have, not only in Illinois, but in the United States. This legislation is a step in the right direction to help solve the problem and ensure clean, safe water for generations to come,” Senator Koehler said.

The legislation is a companion bill to last year’s Senate Bill 1174 which allowed local governments to regulate and inspect private sewage disposal contractors and maintain a minimum code of standards for design, construction, materials, operation and maintenance of private sewage disposal systems.

“By tightening the way in which we build and maintain our septic systems, we are doing our best to keep our fragile water supply as safe and healthy as possible. Water is a finite resource and we must do all we can to keep it in the best possible condition. This bill, along with last years bill, will help us do that,” Senator Koehler said.

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