

IOWWA Members Continue Work at Habitat Site

By Doug Bird, Bremer County Public Health Officer

IOWWA has taken onsite wastewater treatment to two more homes at the Habitat for Humanity site located nearly Waverly, Iowa.

In 2003, IOWWA began work to support a Habitat for Humanity project called Heartland Hills that involved the rehabilitation of 21 homes whose wastewater needs were originally served by a lagoon. These homes, on an abandoned cold war military base, sat empty for several years. Continued service to the lagoon was no longer possible and Habitat for Humanity needed a new wastewater treatment system for the homes.

IOWWA board members recognized that on-site wastewater treatment technology and equipment met this project's needs. In addition to being a worthy service for our organization to provide, IOWWA involvement at the site could also be used as a training aid for industry professionals. After almost two years of coordination, planning and design work, the onsite system for the first four homes was installed through workshops held in April 2005.

In the workshop held on June 9, 2006, the systems installed were Advantex and Ecoflo wastewater treatment units. The Advantex system is a multi-pass packed bed aerobic wastewater treatment system designed for processing of residential strength wastewater. The Ecofilter treats the wastewater from the septic tank by directing it into the biofilters' concrete shell, where it is evenly distributed over the surface of the filtering media using a mechanism without electro-mechanical parts. Both systems then drain to a surface discharge line. As more of the homes are completed, the discharge will be routed to a pump tank that will then discharge to a drip dispersal field.

Without the generous donations of material, equipment and time, this project would not have been possible. We thank the following sponsors for their outstanding support of the association and the June Habitat effort:

Fairfield Precast

Mike Scearcy, Fairfield, IA

Contribution: 2000 gallon septic tank and concrete tank for peat system

Zeigler Cat

Josh Wedemier, Altoona, IA

Contribution: excavation equipment

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Contribution: Ecoflo components

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Contribution: installation

Bremer County Building, Zoning & Sanitation

Doug Bird, Waverly, IA

Contribution: pipe

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Contribution: operating equipment

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Toby Pencil, Denver, IA

Contribution: labor and skid loader

Another round of installations, set for September 15 workshop, will bring the total number of homes with new wastewater treatment systems at Heartland Hills to eight. If you would like to help supply equipment or materials — or volunteer labor — for the Habitat homes, please contact Doug Bird at 319-352-0332.