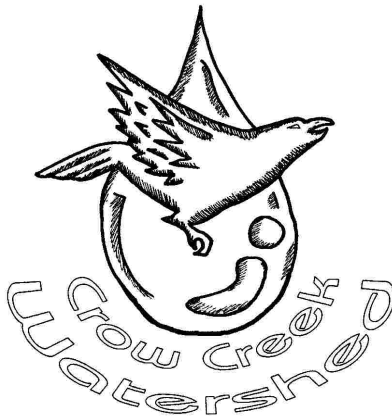


Examples of Source Water Protection Public Education: The Village of Attica Doing It's Part

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This quarterly article is going to be somewhat of a departure from the technical articles that I've written in past issues. In this piece, I want to describe and comment on two recent efforts the Village of Attica, along with the water department, has partaken in to promote watershed protection. These examples of public education are the first of hopefully many that the Village of Attica has been involved with since the inception of their Crow Creek Watershed Protection Program.



An example, and the first step of the village's watershed outreach, was when the village solicited the services of the Attica High School Art classes. The village water department challenged art classes to come up with a concept of a watershed logo for the program. After a number of weeks, the art department came up with several logos from which the village could choose as it's own. A logo was picked (seen above) and will now be used on letterhead, publication materials, and signage. This project accomplished three things; **1)** *it allowed the art department to do a creative project for its students,* **2)** *it helped publicize the watershed program by involving the school, and* **3)** *it has helped put a face on the village's watershed protection program.*

The second watershed outreach example I'm going to discuss was a village sponsored septic system workshop. The workshop, held in May, was geared towards homeowners that reside within the Crow Creek Watershed. The village water department took the initiative to develop an agenda, contact speakers, and publicized the workshop to watershed residents. Contributing to the workshop were the Wyoming County Health Department, Wyoming County SWCD, NYRWA, and a local hauler.



Village of Attica's May Septic System Symposium

Septic system related topics covered in the workshop were “basic design and function of septic systems”, “why do septic systems fail”, “signs of septic system failure”, and “what should one expect from a septic hauler”. In order to help ensure that there would be adequate attendance, the Village of Attica provided a number of vouchers that could be put toward a septic tank pump out. The vouchers not only served as a “carrot” to ensure attendance, it guarantees that a portion of watershed residents will perform septic system maintenance this year. As a result of proper planning and execution, the workshop had over 30 attendees.

So what has the Village of Attica accomplished by investing their resources (money and time) in outreach? In my opinion the Village of Attica has:

- 1) *Reminded the locals that there is an active watershed program in place.*
- 2) *Started the process of recruiting proactive watershed residents for future outreach activities.*
- 3) *Shown the county, state, and federal government that they are willing to spend funds to better educate watershed residents. This will most likely make the Village of Attica a more attractive candidate when funding opportunities become available.*
- 4) *Started the slow process of changing public perception by assigning value to the village’s drinking water source.*

In order to have an effective source water protection program, one must put in place a number of protection measures. By coupling regulatory protection with non-regulatory measures, localities can address potential threats in a variety of ways. These examples of public outreach have helped the Village of Attica promote the fact that there are efforts being made to protect and preserve Attica’s high quality drinking water.