



Forest Township
Rice County
3625 Millersburg Boulevard
Faribault, Minnesota

All Subordinate Sewer District Considering Vendor Contract

**August 4, 2026
6:00 PM
Meeting Agenda**

1. Call the meeting to order

Chairman Larry Conrad called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Larry Conrad, Dan Deutsch, Ashley Anderson, Lisa Trnka, Al Malecha

2. Review quote(s) received

The Board discussed the status of securing a new operating and maintenance provider for the Township's Subordinate Service District (SSD) wastewater systems following the termination of the contract with the current vendor.

Supervisor Larry Conrad reported that he contacted nine potential service providers. Two providers traveled to inspect the systems and two declined to submit proposals after reviewing the scope of work. One provider, Septic Check, submitted a formal proposal.

Septic Check Proposal

A Representative from Septic Check reviewed the proposal and explained the services included under the monthly operating and maintenance fee. Services include:

- Operation and maintenance of all Township wastewater systems in accordance with MPCA permit requirements.
- Routine inspections and preventive maintenance of treatment systems and lift stations.
- Monthly inspections of the community treatment systems, including sludge measurements and operational checks.
- Annual inspections of each individual home connection.

- Collection of all required wastewater samples and completion of laboratory testing required by Rice County and the MPCA.
- Submission of required operating reports and regulatory documentation.
- Remote monitoring of system alarms where available.
- 24-hour emergency response for alarms and system failures.
- Coordination of repairs and replacement of equipment as needed.
- Maintenance of detailed maintenance records and communication with the Township regarding system performance.

Provider Availability

Septic Check stated they have a staff of approximately 22 employees and currently service wastewater systems throughout Minnesota, including International Falls and Rochester. They indicated they travel through the area several times each week and maintain 24/7 availability for emergency response. They are based out of Milaca.

The Township will flush out a process with Septic Check and inform all homeowners of the proper channel of reporting alarms. Depending on the situation, Septic Check would either respond themselves or dispatch one of their contracted local service providers.

System Monitoring

Discussion was held regarding monitoring capabilities and future improvements.

- Circle Lake Estates is committed to monitoring wastewater flows to remain below permitted flow limits.
- Questions were raised regarding how communication devices at individual homes transmit information back to the service provider.
- The Board discussed the need to replace the Circle Lake Estates control panel. A new control panel would provide improved monitoring capabilities, although it would not provide individual household flow data.
- The Township would receive monthly operational reports and annual reports. Annual reports will contain individual household flow information.

Alarm Response

The Board discussed the importance of establishing a clear alarm response process for homeowners. Topics included:

- Developing written alarm response procedures.
- Providing homeowners with updated contact information and alarm stickers displaying the appropriate phone number.
- Encouraging homeowners to monitor alarms if possible until a response arrives.
- Identifying a local septic contractor who could assist with emergency pumping or minor service needs and maintaining access to pumps if needed.

Questions were raised regarding the response time for emergency pumping and service calls.

Tank Pumping and Maintenance

Septic Check recommended establishing a three-year rotating pumping schedule for each home's septic tank. In addition, they would continue sludge measurements ("sludge judge") to determine if pumping is needed sooner.

Discussion also noted that utilizing a local pumping contractor may reduce pumping costs.

Communication with Homeowners

The Board discussed providing homeowners with regular access to system information.

Items discussed included:

- Designating an HOA representative or septic committee spokesperson to receive reports electronically from the Township and distribute information to homeowners.
- Sending a Township letter to all SSD homeowners once a new service provider has been selected with information, including updated information on the Township's website.

System Questions

Additional discussion included:

- Circle Lake Estates HOA has formed a septic committee.
- The Board noted that the contractual relationship for system operation and maintenance will remain between Forest Township and Septic Check rather than individual homeowners.
- Lisa, Treasurer, reviewed the balances for the 4 systems. Circle Lake Estates (if they install a new control panel) and Circle Lake are projected to go negative by the end of the year.

3. Consider quote acceptance

The Board intends to approve the Septic Check proposal at the August 5, 2026, regular Town Board meeting and authorize execution of the annual operating and maintenance service agreement. The proposed annual contract cost is slightly lower than the Township's current agreement and will not result in an increase in the annual operating and maintenance costs for the Township's four wastewater systems.

4. Septic assessment grant opportunity

Lucas informed the Board of a potential grant opportunity to complete a comprehensive septic system assessment. He recommended beginning with a system-wide assessment to better identify infrastructure needs and future capital improvements. The Township will proceed with the grant application process.

5. Adjourn

Larry made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:43. Al seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.