

Williamson County, Tennessee
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Department of
Community Development
2010 ANNUAL REPORT



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING CODES
CODES COMPLIANCE
ENGINEERING
PLANNING
SEWAGE DISPOSAL MANAGEMENT

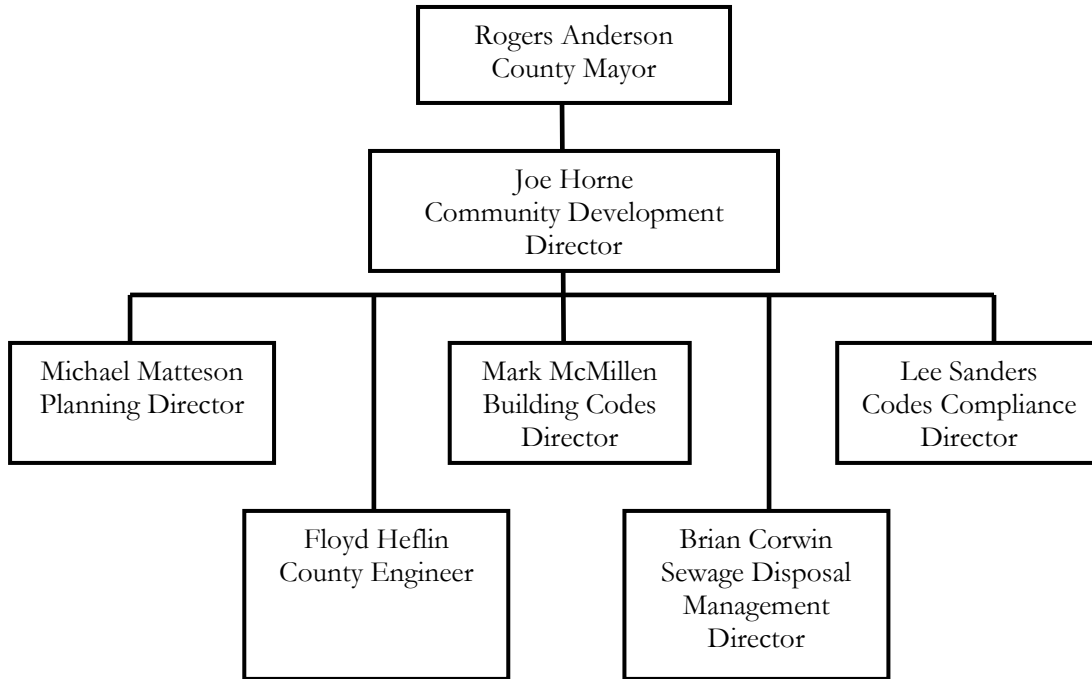
Table of Contents

Department of Community Development.....	4
Introduction	4
Department of Planning & Zoning.....	5
Introduction	5
Overview	5
Zoning Certificates.....	5
Map Amendments	6
Text Amendments	6
Major Subdivisions.....	7
Minor Subdivisions	7
Plat Revisions	7
Non-Residential Site Plans	7
Conditional Uses	8
Staff Level Site Plans	8
Update to the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance	9
Update to the Major Thoroughfare Plan.....	9
Leiper’s Fork Study	10
Planning Goals for 2010.....	10
Department of Codes Compliance	11
Introduction	11
Inspections.....	12
Department of Building Codes.....	13
Introduction	13
Organization.....	13
Building Permits	13
Adequate Facilities Tax	14
Electrical Permits.....	15
Goals	16
Department of Engineering.....	17
Introduction	17
Overview	17
Surety	18
Land Disturbance Permits	18
Blasting Information	18
Floodplain Management.....	18
Storm Water Quantity and Watershed Protection	19

Storm Water Quality and Erosion Control	20
Department Goals for 2011	20
Department of Sewage Disposal Management	21
Introduction	21
Department Organizational Chart.....	22
Board of Health Members	22
Department Overview & Quantitative Data.....	22
Soil Assessment.....	23
Soil Maps	23
Percolation Tests.....	23
Property Development.....	23
Subdivisions and SSDS Location Maps	24
Alternative & Experimental System Designs.....	24
Construction Permits	25
System Inspections.....	28
Other Department Services	29
Licensing of Septic System Installers	31
Pumpers	32
Miscellaneous	32
Department Checklists.....	32
Regulations – Amendments & Review	33
Meadowgreen/Grassland Area Sanitary Sewer Construction Project	33
Commendations	34
Department Goals for 2011	34

Department of Community Development

Introduction

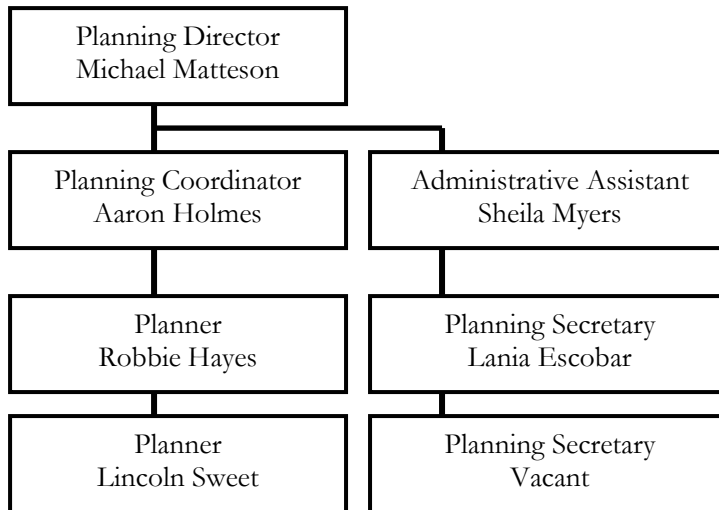


The Community Development Department provides the framework for planning and development services for the unincorporated portion of Williamson County. In a county undergoing the growth confronting Williamson County, it is important these services are integrated as much as practicable. The integration of these services allows not only for the provision of housing and related services to our community, but allows for the opportunity to monitor these markets and develop new techniques to mitigate the effects of this growth.

Department of Planning and Zoning

Introduction

County Planning plays a fundamental role in maintaining the quality of development in Williamson County. This role includes Site Plan and Subdivision review, Comprehensive and Special Area Planning, and assisting developers and the general public in administering the Zoning Ordinance and other regulations. This department is responsible for support of the County Board of Commissioners, the Williamson County Regional Planning Commission, the Highway Commission, and other boards that may require routine aid in administering and interpreting the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Regulations, and for any specific research that may arise.



The County's Planning Department is located on the 4th floor of the Williamson County Administrative Complex along with the Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Engineering, and Sewage Disposal Management Departments. County Planning services are directed by Michael Matteson, Planning Director, who is assisted by Aaron Holmes, Robbie Hayes, and Lincoln Sweet.

Overview

The following is a summary of the activity for 2010. This data will allow the Staff, the Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners and the general public insight into the amount of growth within the county.

Zoning Certificates

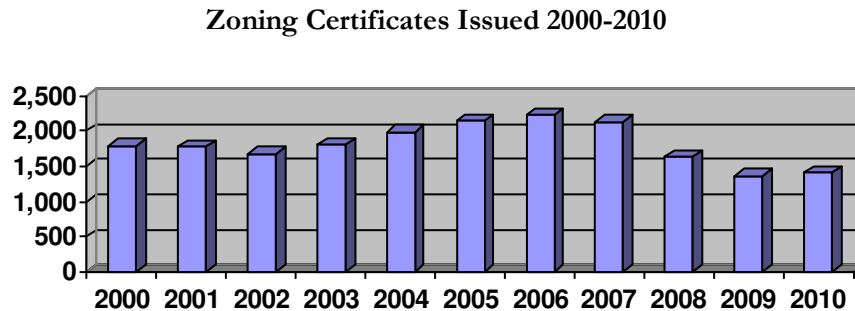
This form is the beginning of the planning process for both the general public and developers. For every inquiry, whether it be for a new home, an addition to an existing home, a swimming pool, a subdivision, or a non-residential development, a Zoning Certificate is required. This form serves two purposes. The first is to provide both the staff and the applicant with a written record of the required procedure to achieve an approval. Secondly, this written record can help alleviate any misunderstandings between the staff and the applicant.

When a request for a Zoning Certificate is submitted, the staff obtains the property assessment card, confirms the zoning, the use that is currently on the property, and the floodplain status, if any. Staff will determine if the requested use can occur on the property and, if it is allowed, the applicant may proceed. In some instances, the Plans Review process is required before the staff can grant approval to a use. Plans Review provides each department, i.e. Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Engineering, Highway, Planning, and Sewage Disposal an opportunity to review the request to ensure it meets their requirements as well. In 2007, the Community Development Department incorporated workflow software, Laserfische, into the building permit process, which has aided in a more effective and efficient review of plans. This software gives the Planning Department greater coordination and flexibility with other departments during the building permit process.

As a general practice, “same day service” is the goal. However, per section 9230 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Staff may take up to three (3) days to approve a request for a single lot development, and up to thirty (30) days for multiple lot developments. The Staff attempts to make the wait for review as short as possible in all instances.

In 2010, the staff processed 1,411 Zoning Certificates. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1



Map Amendments

There were no amendments to the zoning map made in 2010, i.e. requests to rezone property.

Text Amendments

In 2010, there was one (1) amendment to various regulations utilized by the Planning Department. Some of these amendments go hand in hand, i.e. if one regulation is amended, another might have to be amended in order to achieve the desired result.

- There was one (1) amendment to the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance.
- There were no (0) amendments to the Williamson County Subdivision Regulations.
- There were no (0) amendments to the Williamson County Stormwater Regulations.
- There were no (0) amendments to the Williamson County Wastewater Regulations, which are a part of the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance.

- There were no (0) amendments to the Williamson County Planning Commission Bylaws.

Major Subdivisions

Major subdivisions are defined as those consisting of five (5) or more lots. In this category, there are not only conventional subdivisions but Resource Conservation Developments (RCDs) and Planned Resource Conservation Developments (PRCDs). The following table details the activity for this year. See Table 1 below.

Table 1

	Name	Section	Lots
1	Temple Hills (Revision)	Section 16	77
2	Hart’s Landmark (Revision)		25
3	Hart’s Landmark (Re-Approval)		27
4	King’s Chapel (Re-Approval)	Phase 3	39
5	Silver Stream Farm	Phase 6	30
6	Laurel Cove (Re-Approval)	Phase 2	96
7	Mystic Ridge (Stillwater) (Re-Approval)	Phase 1	203
8	Arrington Retreat (Sedona Woods)	Section 1	48
9	Laurelbrooke (Revision)	Section 11A	13
10	Chardonnay (Revision)	Section 2	48
11	Silver Stream Farm	Section 8	28
12	Temple Hills	Section 16, Phase B	25
13	Chardonnay (Revision)	Section 2	43

Minor Subdivisions

Minor Subdivisions consist of no more than two (2) lots. Where there are no bondable improvements required, Staff has the discretion to review and approve these plats. In 2010, Staff processed 27 Minor Subdivisions consisting of 40 lots.

Plat Revisions

Plat Revisions that contain two (2) or fewer lots are subject to review and approval by the Staff. There are many different items that may be dealt with on a revised plat, including a lot line shift. In 2010, Staff processed revisions to 27 plats.

Non-Residential Site Plans

The Planning Commission has reviewed a diverse range of non-residential site plans. In 2010, there were four (4) non-residential site plans reviewed. Table 2 outlines those plans reviewed.

Table 2

	Project Name	SF	Comments
1	Clovercroft Elementary School Wastewater Treatment & Disposal System	N/A	Abandoned
2	Camp Holiday	N/A	Rural Retreat, Extensive
3	Franklin Christian Academy (Bethlehem United Methodist Church)	N/A	
4	Grace Chapel and Academy Wastewater Treatment & Disposal System	N/A	

Conditional Uses

The Zoning Ordinance defines a conditional use as having some special or unique impact on the surrounding properties. Conditional uses are evaluated by the Planning Commission through the public hearing process. In 2010, the Planning Commission reviewed sixteen (16) conditional uses. Table 3 illustrates those reviewed.

Table 3

	Project Name	SF	Comments
1	Creekside Riding Academy	7,200	Commercial Stable- Abandoned
2	Jani's Auction Gallery	10,000	Mixed Commercial - Abandoned
3	Animal Haven Health Center	3,482	Agricultural Support
4	Tractors-N-More, LLC	1,793	Residential Business
5	Mid America Distributors	N/A	Temp Firework Stand
6	Mid America Distributors	N/A	Temp Firework Stand
7	Glenn Grocery	1,600	Commercial
8	Bonnie's Barnyard	6,000	Heavy Retail
9	Jani's Treasures & Antiques	3,700	Heavy Retail
10	Leiper's Fork Inn	2,938	Hotel
11	Matt Mahaffey Home Studio	1,100	Recording Studio
12	Security Central Storage		Light Industrial
13	Jeanne Pruett Fulton Private Recording Studio	598	Recording Studio
14	Pet Vet	6,405	Agricultural Support
15	Mid America Distributors	N/A	Temp. Firework Stand
16	Silver Stream Farm	327 Lots	Denied

Staff Level Site Plans

The Zoning Ordinance allows Site Plans for certain uses in certain Zoning Districts to be reviewed and approved by Planning Department staff, rather than by the Planning Commission. Table 4 lists those Site Plans approved at the staff level.

Staff Level Site Plans

Table 4

	Type	SF/Lots	Comments
1	Currey Ingram Academy	996 SF	Addition
2	Lynnwood Way Co-Location Tower		Co-Location Tower
3	Berry's Chapel Church Co-Location Tower		Co-Location Tower
4	Trading Post		
5	Triune Community Center		Parking
6	Page Middle School		Portable/Equip. Shed
7	Verizon		Communication Tower
8	Burcham Stables		Parking
9	Christ Presbyterian Academy		Addition
10	Berry's Chapel Church Co-Location Tower		Co-Location Tower
11	Currey Ingram Academy		Add Tennis Court
12	Animal Haven Health Center	544 SF	Addition
13	Artist Promotion & Sales		
14	Hillsboro Elementary Middle School		Portables
15	Trading Post Pawn Shop		Mixed Commercial
16	Harpeth Valley Utilities		Water Line & Booster Station
17	Pinewood Convenience Center		
18	Gypsy's Apothecary & Drygoods		
19	Joe Natural's Farm Store & Café		Change of Use
20	Brigadoon/Highgroove Antiques		Change of Use

Update to the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance

One of the major goals of the Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in the fall of 2007, is to update the County's Zoning Ordinance. Staff has been working on this effort, with assistance from McBride Dale Clarion, and with direction from a Steering Committee that was established by the Board of County Commissioners. In 2010, a public review draft of Modules 1 and 2 of the new Ordinance was completed, and four public meetings were held in order to solicit input from the public. In addition to the public meetings, Staff held three (3) focus group meetings to solicit input from specific stakeholder groups. In 2010, Staff also completed an internal draft of the third and final Module. The update to the Zoning Ordinance is scheduled to be completed during 2011.

Update to the Major Thoroughfare Plan

Planning efforts for the Nashville Area MPO's Southwest Mobility Study, which will address current and future transportation needs in the southwest portion of the MPO region, were begun in late 2008. As a part of this larger study, the County's Major Thoroughfare Plan will be updated. This Plan will evaluate the County's long-range transportation needs along with the needs of portions of adjacent counties. It is anticipated that the Plan will be completed in 2011.

Leiper's Fork Study

In 2010, the County began the process of developing a Special Area Plan for the Leiper's Fork Village. Staff began the process by first gathering information regarding the historical background of the community as well as existing conditions of land uses, natural resources, demographics, and businesses and civic organizations. This information is critical in gaining an understanding of Leiper's Fork, and will aid in future land use decisions made during later phases of plan development.

Staff also worked towards engaging the public through the development of a Citizens Advisory Committee and a series of public involvement meetings. The Citizens Advisory Committee, made up of residents, civic leaders, and business owners within the Village boundaries, will work with Staff to ensure that the community's ideas are well-represented in the Plan. The public involvement phase of the Plan began with an initial Open House, which allowed Staff to explain the objective of the Plan and also to familiarize the community with the study area. Following the Open House, the first Public Involvement meeting was held, which allowed the community to initiate their ideas on the issues facing the Leiper's Fork Village. Subsequent meetings will be held in 2011 to continue the public involvement process, allowing for the Vision, Goals, and Objectives to be developed.

The Leiper's Fork Special Area Plan will articulate a vision for the future of the Village and will serve as a guide for future land use decisions. The plan will also form the basis for tailored development standards, which will help implement the vision described in the Plan. The Plan is expected to be completed in Spring of 2011.

Planning Goals for 2010

The Planning Department has established a number of goals for the coming year. Chief among these goals is completing the update to the County's Zoning Ordinance, which establishes rules and regulations related to land development in the unincorporated County. Other key planning efforts will involve completing the Leiper's Fork Special Area Plan, and updating the County's Subdivision Regulations, its Major Thoroughfare Plan and the traffic shed methodology contained within the Zoning Ordinance.

Department of Codes Compliance

Introduction

Codes Compliance plays a basic role in maintaining the quality of life in Williamson County, assisting developers and the general public negotiating zoning and other regulations to the mutual benefit of both. This department is responsible for support of the Board of Zoning Appeals and other boards for the routine processes of administering and interpreting the Zoning Ordinance, issuing sign permits, zoning inspections, and for specific research as the need arises. Codes Compliance is the enforcement branch of the Community Development Office.

Codes Compliance is located on the 4th floor of the Administrative Complex, along with the Building Codes, Planning and Engineering Departments. Codes Compliance activities are directed by Lee Sanders, Codes Director, who is assisted by Linda Hodges, Michelle Jackson and Brenda Midgett.

Table 5

Board of Zoning Appeals Cases For	Total 2006	Total 2007	Total 2008	Total 2009	Total 2010
Total Agenda Items	16	26	20	22	16
Variances	9	8	8	8	8
Appeals	2	4	0	3	0
Special Uses	2	8	9	6	7
Other	2	6	3	5	1

Special Uses By Category

Table 6

Mobile Home as Temporary Residence	0	0	0	0	0
Accessory Dwelling	0	4	5	1	3
Farm Employee Housing	0	1	0	0	0
Communications Tower	0	0	0	2	0
Events of Public Interest	2	3	3	3	4
Family or Adult Day Care	0	0	1	0	0

Board of Zoning Appeals Members for 2010

Dave Ausbrooks - Chairman

Steve Wherley - Vice Chairman

Don Crohan – Secretary/Representing the Planning Commission

Sue Workman - Member

Karen Emerson-McPeak – Member

Inspections

The Codes Compliance Department is also responsible for numerous inspections and related enforcement. Some of these inspections are based on building permit activity and some are initiated from complaints received from the public. Compliance inspectors are expected to initiate inspections of violations and non-permitted construction as they patrol the county.

Table 7

Activity	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Complaints Logged	209	215	172	141	147
Complaints/ No Violation Cited	92	61	53	46	42
General Code Violations = Complaints - No violation	117	154	119	95	105
Cases Closed This Year	195	197	188	180	140
Signs Removed	351	123	458*	401*	527*
Sign Violation Notices	62	46	162*	139*	128*
Sign Permits	69	71	70	67	69
Overgrown Lot Cases	10	6	15	25	46
Overgrown Lot Inspections	45	18	34	58	105
Pool Permits	109	113	90	62	57
Pool Fence Inspections	317	375	215	185	135
Mobile Home Permits	27	19	11	7	8
Mobile Home Inspections	133	72	82	63	57
Junk Car Cases	18	16	28	16	17
Junk Car Inspections	76	62	66	42	46
Zoning Advisory Letters	16	14	32	NA	NA
Department Phone Calls	2420	2344	2038	1787	1612
Permits Reviewed	1386	912	885	537	728

* There were many signs placed in violation that were removed, but no notice was sent, either because of time limitations or inability to determine name/address of responsible party. Agreement was reached in 2008 allowing our office to administer the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance regulations in State rights-of-way, resulting in an increase in 2008, 2009, and 2010 in the number of unpermitted off-site signs picked up by staff.

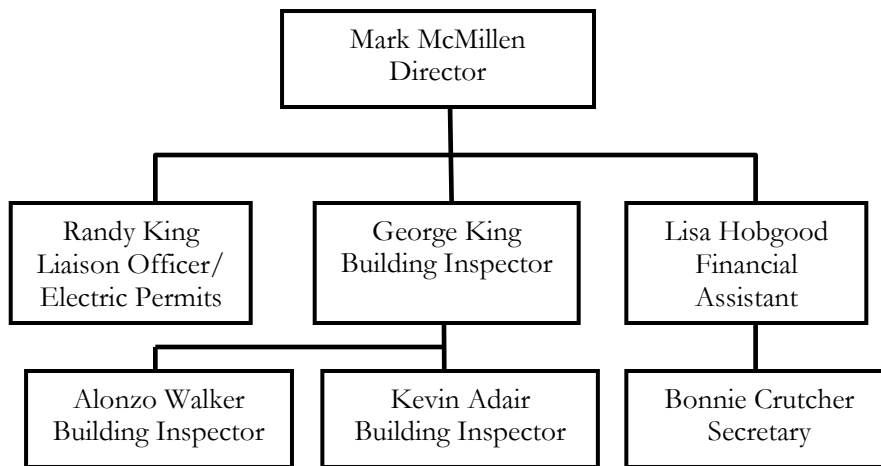
Department of Building Codes

Introduction

Serving a necessary role in the development of Williamson County, the Department of Building Codes insures that all construction within the unincorporated areas of the County meets current building codes adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Organization

Grouped under Community Development with Codes Compliance, Engineering, Sewage Disposal Management, and Planning, the Building Codes Department is directed by Mark McMillen.



Building Permits

Building permits for new single-family dwellings remained consistent with 2009. Total permits for 2010 show an increase, which was generated by a slow growing economy and the flooding that occurred in May of 2010. The following shows Building Permits and valuation for the past five (5) years issued in the unincorporated area of Williamson County. See Figures 2 and 3 below.

Table 8

Year	New SFR	Valuation	Total Permits	Valuation
2010	129	\$42M	610	\$71M
2009	139	\$54M	483	\$92M
2008	193	\$79M	636	\$131M
2007	322	\$157M	781	\$187M
2006	448	\$188M	865	\$221M

Figure 2

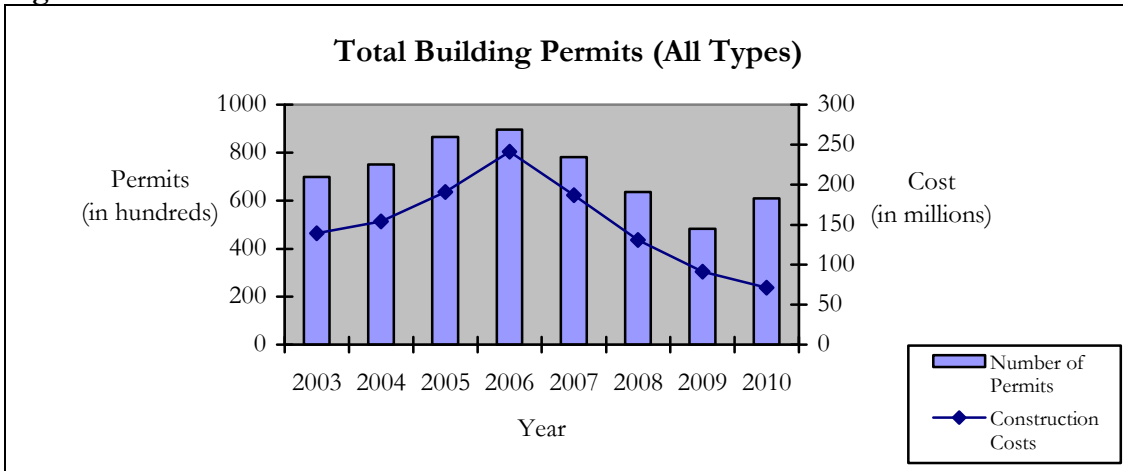
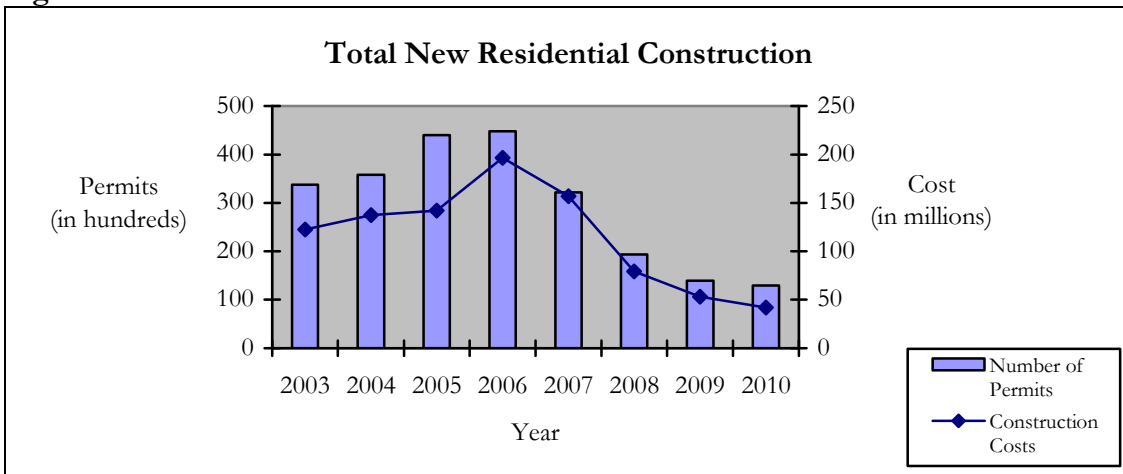


Figure 3



Adequate Facilities Tax

Officially referred to as Privilege Tax, this tax is assessed on new residential and commercial structures to offset the cost of growth on the County’s infrastructure.

Building Codes has the responsibility of assessing and collecting this tax for both the unincorporated area of the county as well as for the cities of Brentwood, Franklin, Nolensville, and Spring Hill. These funds, once collected, are deposited with the County Trustee.

Effective July 1, 2007, the County Board of Commissioners enacted a new “Adequate Facilities Tax” (AFT) in schools. This additional \$1.00 per square foot is devoted solely to construction of new schools and is collected on new residential structures only.

All new County residential construction is assessed at \$2.00 per square foot, including areas that may be completed at a later date. Areas not included are unfinished basements, garages, carports, porches and accessory structures. All County commercial structures under roof are computed at \$0.34 per square foot. This includes areas such as bank drive thru, covered service station islands and material storage areas. City residential construction is also assessed

at \$2.00 per square foot. The distributions of residential and commercial revenues are listed in Table 8, and Figures 4 and 5 below.

Table 9

County Residential Revenue Distribution		Commercial Revenue Distribution		City Residential Revenue Distribution	
Purpose	Amount	Purpose	Amount	Purpose	Amount
Schools*	\$0.70	Roads	\$0.30	Schools*	\$0.92
Roads	\$0.20	Fire Protection	\$0.04	Parks/Rec	\$0.08
Parks/Rec	\$0.08				
Fire Protection	\$0.02				

*Does not include \$1.00 per square foot for the new Adequate Facilities Tax (AFT).

Figure 4

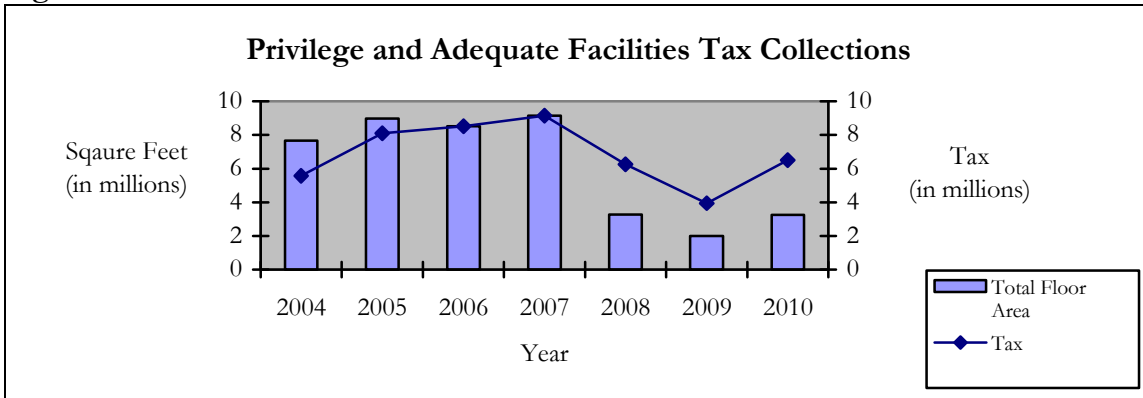
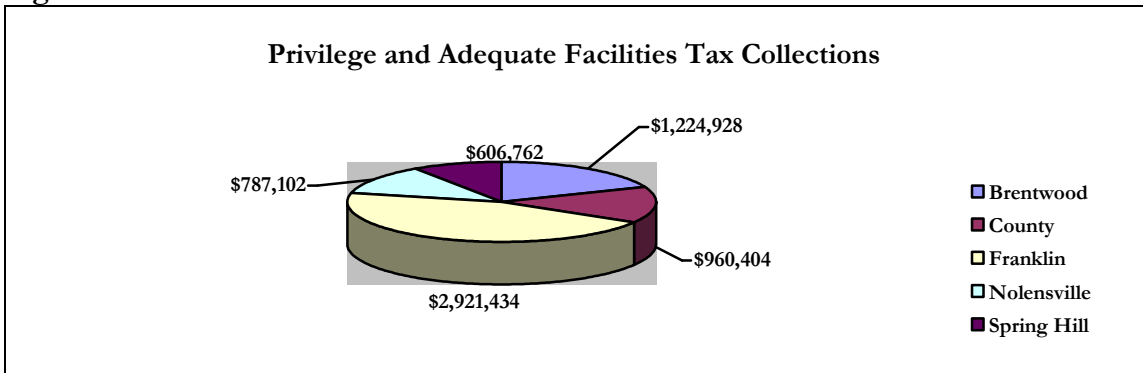


Figure 5



Electrical Permits

Beginning in December 2010, the Building Codes Department commenced the sale of electrical permits. These permits are valid for all jurisdictions within Williamson County except the City of Franklin. The electrical inspections themselves will continue to be conducted by contract employees of the Tennessee State Fire Marshall’s office. The addition of this service should offer further convenience to those seeking building permits within the unincorporated County. In addition to his liaison duties, Randy King is the lead

Staff member for the sale of electrical permits. These permits will be available from 8am-12pm Monday through Friday at the Building Codes Department.

Goals

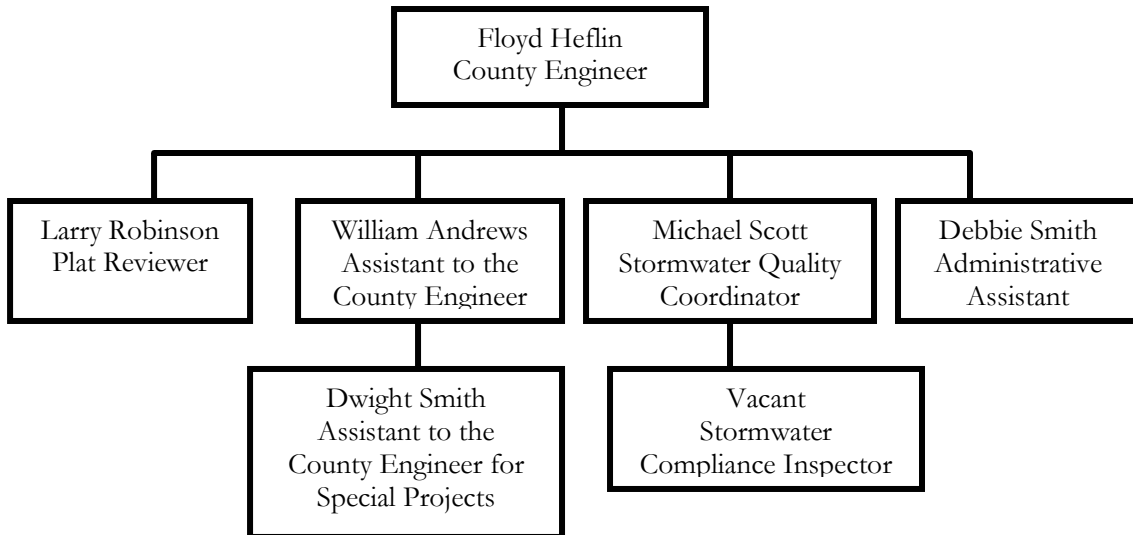
The adoption of new building codes by the County Commission in 2010, as required by state law, requires the implementation of new energy code standards for both single-family residences and commercial buildings. Increasing certification requirements for inspectors provides a challenge that we will strive to meet in the most cost-effective manner.

Department of Engineering

Introduction

County Engineering works to maintain the quality of development in Williamson County while assisting developers and the general public in interpreting development regulations and implementing associated requirements. This Department is responsible for support to the County Commission, Storm Water Appeals Board, Highway Commission, Planning Commission, and other boards for the routine processes of administering and interpreting the Storm Water Management Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Regulations, engineering practices, and for specific research as the need arises.

County Engineering is located in Community Development along with Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Sewage Disposal Management, and County Planning. Engineering activities are directed by Floyd Heflin, P.E., County Engineer, who is assisted by William Andrews, Dwight Smith, Michael Scott, Larry Robinson, and Debbie Smith.



Overview

The Engineering Department is an essential part of the Community Development team. One of the main duties of the Department is to review and approve all construction plans for new development. This review now includes storm water quality requirements imposed by our Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), Division of Water Pollution Control. Delineation and platting of areas required for on-site sewage systems is also coordinated with Sewage Disposal Management. Letters of credit for approved construction projects are estimated and established. When on-site storm water detention is neither possible nor practical for these developments, funds in-lieu-of detention are estimated, levied, and placed in an account for use on community storm water management projects of

greater magnitude. Surety for public improvements is reviewed and field inspections are performed on work in progress to assess compliance.

Other responsibilities vary from coordination of infrastructure testing and outside consultants, to assisting County residents with drainage and erosion control issues. Additionally, traffic and roadway issues, floodplain management, storm water enforcement, and various engineering-related concerns are addressed daily. The Engineering Department coordinates with the Highway Department, as required, concerning new development affecting County maintained roadways. Land Disturbance permits are also issued from the Engineering Department after review and approval of grading, drainage, and erosion control plans.

Surety

The Engineering Department establishes surety amounts for roads, drainage, and erosion control. Letters of credit for new development are received at the final plat stage as required by the Planning Commission. Letters of credit help insure proper performance during construction, and high infrastructure quality upon completion. Currently, the Engineering Department administers letters of credit totaling **\$9,681,462** for roads, drainage and erosion control. In 2010, **3.162** miles of roadway were released from surety and accepted by the Highway Commission and County Commission for addition to the County road system. William Andrews coordinates the assessment and review of infrastructure surety.

Land Disturbance Permits

2010 was the fifth full year of fee collection under the Storm Water Management Regulations that went into effect 01/01/05. Any activity disturbing more than one acre of land must provide a site specific erosion control plan and obtain a land disturbance permit. Additionally, individual lots less than one (1) acre in size, which are part of a larger plan of development, are also regulated if the entire development disturbs more than one (1) acre of land. During 2010, 93 permits were issued for individual lots at a cost of \$150 per permit, while six (6) permits were issued for subdivisions or non-residential site plans at a cost of \$300 per permit. Total Land Disturbance Permit fees equaled **\$15,750**.

Blasting Information

Although no permit is issued by the County, applicants are required to disclose the purpose and extent of blasting activity, when the blasting will occur, and how the blasting will be supervised. Relevant safety measures required to protect the surrounding property owners from sustaining damages should also be discussed. The applicant is also required to provide this office with a certificate of insurance stating the extent of their coverage. Blasting is regulated by the State Fire Marshall's Office.

Floodplain Management

2010 was a busy year for the department's floodplain management efforts. The May floods caused widespread damage and resulted in excess of 140 permits for repair or reconstruction. Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs) on staff worked to assist the public on a daily basis and determine which properties had incurred Substantial Damage. The County Zoning Ordinance requires that Substantially Damaged structures be brought into compliance with floodplain regulations when repaired or reconstructed.

During the Fall of 2010, the Engineering Department worked to initiate the County's participation in a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). This program provides 87.5% matching funds for the buyout of certain qualifying properties damaged in May flooding. Seven (7) structures were identified as eligible for the program, and notification was sent to property owners. Public notice was also given, and a public meeting held to determine if other qualifying individuals may exist. Grant application and administration will continue throughout 2011.

The County continues to qualify and be recertified as a Class 9 community under the Community Rating System (CRS). The County's participation in this program allows a **5% discount** on flood insurance premiums paid after October 1, 2008. The Engineering Department is currently exploring opportunities to further improve our status to Class 8 allowing premium discounts of 10%..

Storm Water Quantity and Watershed Protection

The Engineering Department completed grant participation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) related to tornado debris cleanup. The NRCS provided 75% matching funds for cleanup of debris related to a 2008 tornado. Work totaled approximately \$500,000 and occurred in creeks and streams in the area of Lampley, South Harpeth, Pinewood, Caney Fork, Old Harding, and Bedford Creek Roads. The work was done to prevent further downstream damage to public infrastructure from floating debris.

The Zoning Ordinance and Storm Water Management Regulations require the identification and evaluation of potential storm water impacts from increased run-off associated with new development. It is often necessary for the designer to incorporate facilities that provide for the attenuation of storm water discharges to pre-development levels. Detention facilities are engineered devices that insure that the rate (and to some extent the volume) of storm water run-off is no greater after development than it was prior to proposed construction. There are occasions where detention is not advantageous at a particular site within a drainage basin. When it is determined that detention at the project site is not a suitable Best Management Practice (BMP), funds in-lieu-of detention are levied against the development, or in-kind storm water improvements are provided. When funds are collected, they are placed into an escrow account to be used on regional projects that benefit the County as a whole. Examples of areas where these funds could be utilized are summarized as follows:

- Federal cost sharing programs with the Corps of Engineers to study potential locations for regional detention facilities, flood gages, or other storm water management facilities.
- Professional fees for verifying data, establishing floodplain information, and developing storm water management programs.
- GIS and watershed modeling
- Maintenance of existing regional storm water facilities.

In 2010, the Department of Community Development continued work with AMEC, funded through “in-lieu-of” funds, to update watershed models and establish a framework for reviewing the impacts of future development scenarios.

Storm Water Quality and Erosion Control

Williamson County is required by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to have a Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 permit for storm water. Requirements of the permit include controlling construction site runoff and illicit discharges. Other components involve public education, community involvement, and enforcement. While compliance is the goal of the program, **\$12,500** in storm water penalties were collected during 2010.

Permit compliance is managed by Michael Scott who also coordinates the agenda of the Storm Water Appeals Board. This Board meets monthly as needed to hear appeals of the Storm Water Management Regulations. **Five (5)** appeals were heard in 2010 representing **\$500** in application fees. **Two (2)** additional appeals were processed by the County Engineer.

Department Goals for 2011

It is the desire of the Engineering Department to work in a cooperative effort with other Departments, elected officials, and County residents to continue to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens and to enhance the environment and infrastructure of Williamson County. Specifically, we hope to complete our storm water quality guidance to supplement the regulations, and seek additional premium discounts for the residents of Williamson County under the Community Rating System. We will also anticipate approval of our HMGP grant and removal of the associated flood risks.

Department of Sewage Disposal Management

Introduction

The Department of Sewage Disposal Management is charged with the task of ensuring that the laws of Williamson County regarding the use and placement of individual, on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems (i.e., septic systems), are fairly implemented and enforced so as to protect:

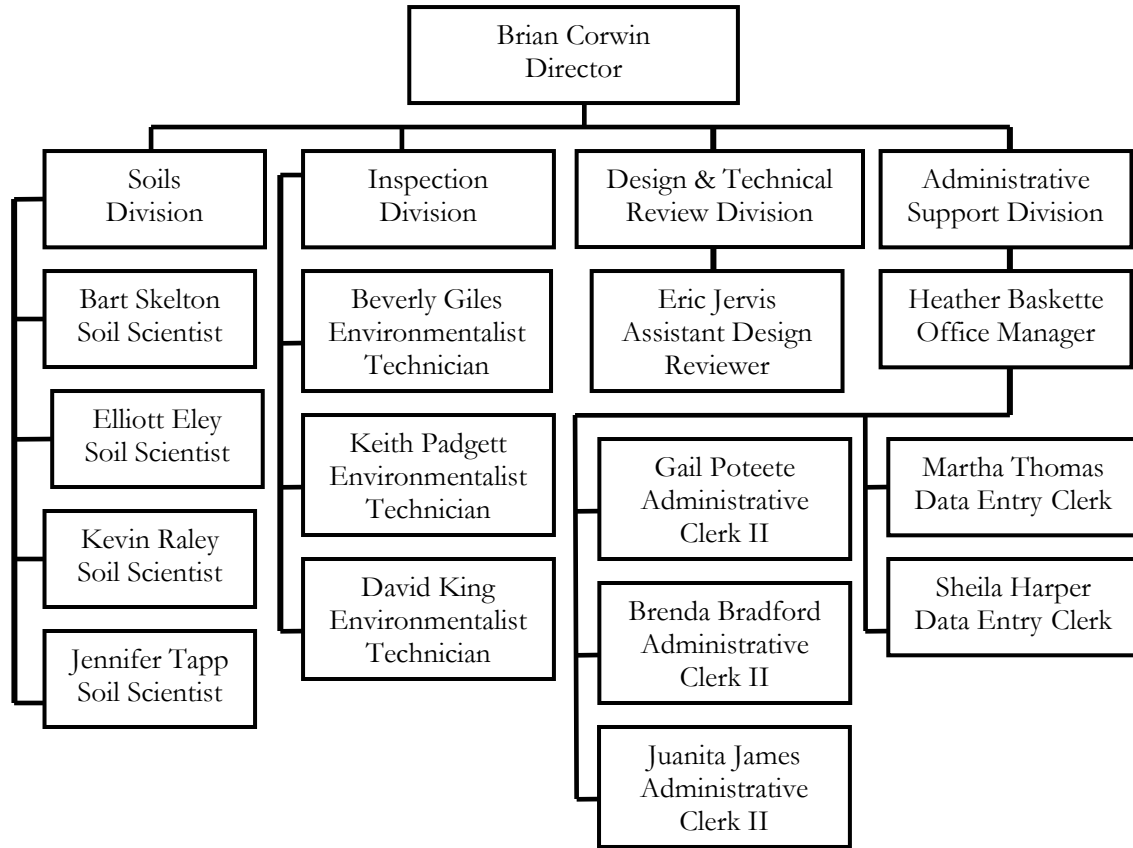
- The health and well-being of the general public;
- The irreplaceable groundwater and surface water resources of the County; and
- The quality of the environment which the citizens of the County enjoy.

The Department is empowered to regulate subsurface sewage disposal in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated Title 68, Chapter 221, Part 4. In January of 1993, pursuant to provisions outlined in said code, Williamson County chose to enter into and executed an agreement (i.e., contract) with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to implement the provisions of this part of the state code in its area of jurisdiction. Additionally, the Department is governed by the Board of Health of Williamson County. The ten members of the Board of Health have the power to promulgate all regulations, rules and policies of the Department, and grant variances of such rules when deemed appropriate and necessary.

Williamson County Government has jurisdiction over all proposed or existing septic system installations within the boundaries of Williamson County. In addition to the lands governed by the County, this jurisdiction also includes all land areas contained within the boundaries of the incorporated cities and towns which lie within the County. Thus, the Department of Sewage Disposal Management is the agency charged with the implementation, interpretation, and enforcement of the regulations. In addition to the State of Tennessee's *Rules of the Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Groundwater Protection (TDEC-GWP); Chapter 1200-1-6: Regulations to Govern Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems*, the County adopted its own set of rules in May 2000. Effective in October of the same year, the *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems of the Williamson County Department of Sewage Disposal Management* are no less stringent, and in many respects are more stringent, than the state regulations.

Our office is located on the fourth floor of the Williamson County Administrative Complex in Suite 411. Brian K. Corwin is the Director and is assisted by Office Manager, Heather Baskette. The department staff is divided into four groups: Soil Scientists, Inspectors, Design Review, and Administrative Support.

Department Organizational Chart



Board of Health Members

The Williamson County Board of Health is composed of ten (10) members including Chairman and County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Dr. Charlie Beauchamp, Becky Brumley, Cyndy Howes, Martin Myers, III, Dr. Gary Owen, Jeanna Roush, Dr. C.A. Stillwell, Jorja Trocino, and Dr. Joseph Willoughby.

Department Overview & Quantitative Data

In order to carry out our mission, the Department is directly involved and oversees every aspect associated with on-site subsurface sewage disposal within the County limits. This “cradle-to-grave” approach begins with the earliest phases of property development, continues through final system installation and on throughout the life of the system. The implementation of this process encompasses much more than simply permitting systems. It involves every aspect associated with the permitting process and in essence has evolved into a form of quality control to ensure the protection of public health and the environment with regard to sewage disposal. These Departmental responsibilities and processes, and their statistics, are further explored in the following paragraphs.

Soil Assessment

Soil assessment involves the processes, practices and techniques utilized to evaluate the soils on a parcel of land to determine whether or not those soils will support the installation of a subsurface sewage disposal system. These soil assessment methodologies include soil mapping, percolation tests and general soil surveys. The Department's soil scientist staff manages this aspect of the program. Part of this responsibility includes the review and approval of all soil maps and percolation tests submitted by independent consultants for conformance with the regulations, as well as with accepted soil science standards.

Soil Maps

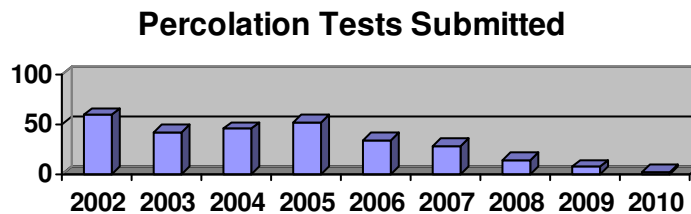
In 2010, the Department received one (1) application for a preliminary soil investigation, as compared to four (4) of the same in 2009. According to fees collected, the soils division completed three (3) soil maps in 2010 covering three (3) acres. The Department completed seven (7) soil maps totaling 5.25 acres in 2009, and seven (7) in 2008.

Responsibilities of Department Soil Scientists also include on-site verification of soil maps submitted by private soil consultants. In 2010, 75 soil maps were verified by Department staff, only two (2) less than were reviewed the prior year.

Percolation Tests

Although much more sophisticated and accurate methodology is available for soil evaluation, percolation tests are still accepted in limited situations for property development. In 2010, only two (2) percolation tests were received for evaluation by the Department versus seven (7) in 2009. As noted in Figure 6 below, the use of percolation tests is continuing to decline.

Figure 6



Property Development

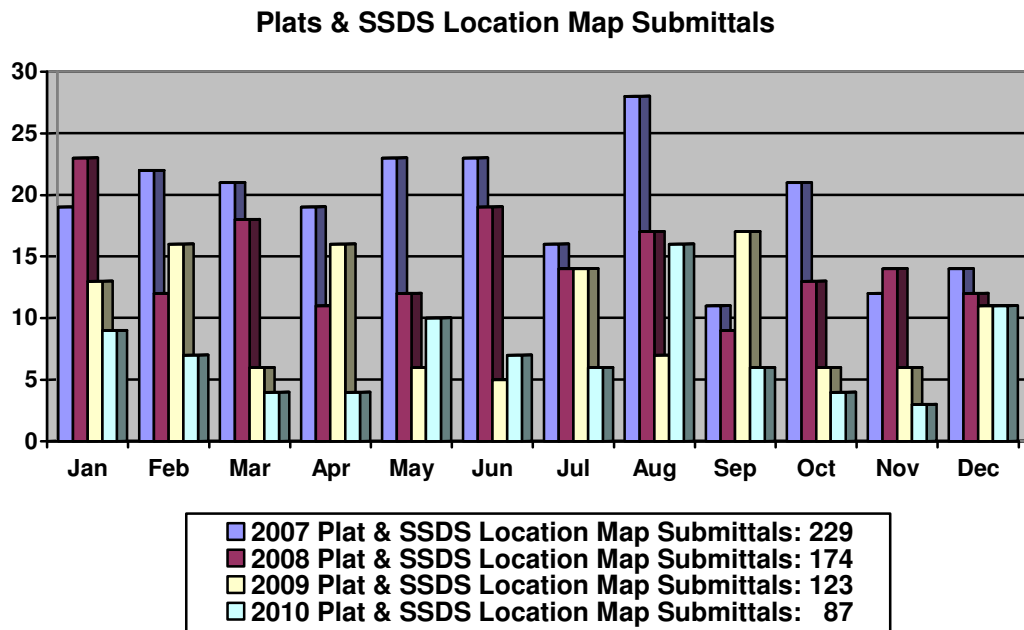
Utilizing the soil assessment information, a land parcel can then be evaluated for suitability for the use of subsurface sewage disposal systems. Department staff oversees this process for both platted and un-platted parcels of land. This involves working with independent consultants (e.g., surveyors, engineers, etc.) on everything from lot configuration, to the determination of system type, to area sizing and setback requirements, among a multitude of other things. These responsibilities include the review and approval of subdivision plats (and their revisions) for adherence to all applicable laws and regulations.

Subdivisions and SSDS Location Maps

Any proposed subdivision of land which requires the use of subsurface sewage disposal systems, or any individual lot of any size which requires location of suitable septic areas in order to be deemed buildable, must be reviewed and approved by the Department. The resulting Subdivision Plat (which also requires concurrent review and approval by the Planning Department) or Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Location Map must be recorded in the Register of Deeds Office before septic system *Construction Permits* can be issued.

The Department realized a sharp drop in Plat and Location Map submittals in 2009, due to a slowdown in real estate development and construction. Based upon processing fees of \$23,750 collected in 2009, the Department received and reviewed approximately 123 Final Plat and SSDS Location Map submittals, depicting approximately 190 subdivision and individual lots. That represented a decrease in reviews of individual lots of approximately 44% from the previous year's 341. In 2010, the downward trend continued as the Department received and reviewed 87 Final Plat and SSDS Location Map submittals, depicting 118 subdivision and individual lots, collecting fees of \$14,750. These statistics do not include Preliminary Plat reviews, Sketch Plan reviews, or reviews of re-submittals required to rectify errors and omissions. See Figure 7 below.

Figure 7



Alternative & Experimental System Designs

All alternative and experimental on-site wastewater systems are required to be designed by a licensed engineer. The Department's design review staff oversees the review and approval of all system design plans for conformance with the regulations, as well as with accepted engineering practices and standards.

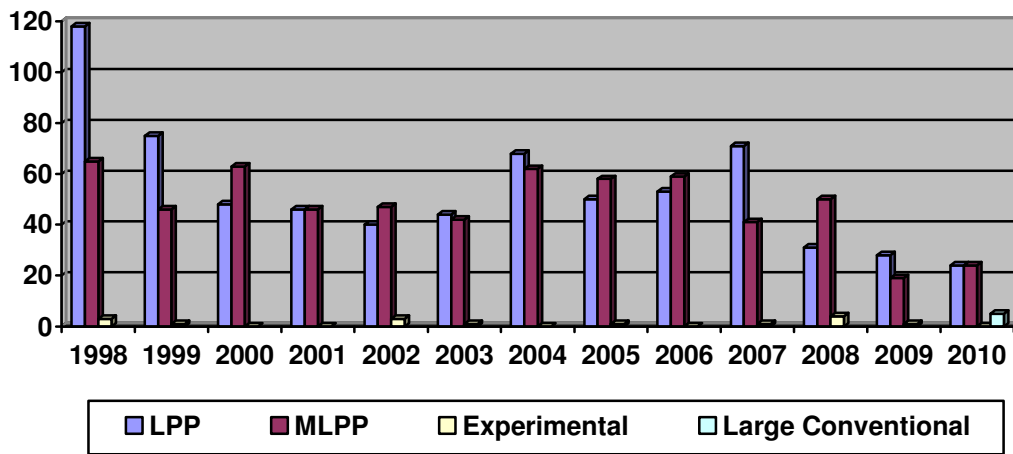
Three types of alternative systems are utilized in Williamson County; standard Low Pressure Pipe (LPP) systems not requiring soil modification; Modified Low Pressure Pipe (MLPP) systems requiring soil modification; and Mound systems. The use of experimental systems is rare and restricted to repair purposes only, where proper soil conditions do not exist for installation of a code compliant system.

Effective January 1, 2010, in response to new state regulations, the Department implemented a new regulation stating that any conventional system serving a structure with a wastewater flow in excess of 750-gpd is considered a “large” conventional system, and must be designed by a licensed engineer. The total number of design plans reviewed in 2010 increased by five (5) (coincidentally the same number of Large Conventional System design plans reviewed), a 10% increase over the prior year. Reviews of LPP and MLPP design plans remained flat. Total design plans reviewed still represents a 53% decline from the high of one hundred twelve (112) in 2007 when the activity in real estate development and the building industry was peaking. A total of 53 design plans were reviewed in 2010, with 24 of those being LPP, 24 MLPP, and five (5) Large Conventional. 48 design plans were reviewed in 2009, with 28 of those being LPP, nineteen 19 MLPP, and one (1) being an experimental system. See Figure 8 below.

It is interesting to note that of the 53 design plans reviewed in 2010, 45 (approximately 85%) required revisions and, of those, 47% required at least a second round of revisions. Each set of revised design plans had to then be re-reviewed by staff. This trend has been fairly stable over the last few years.

Figure 8

Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Design Plans Reviewed



Construction Permits

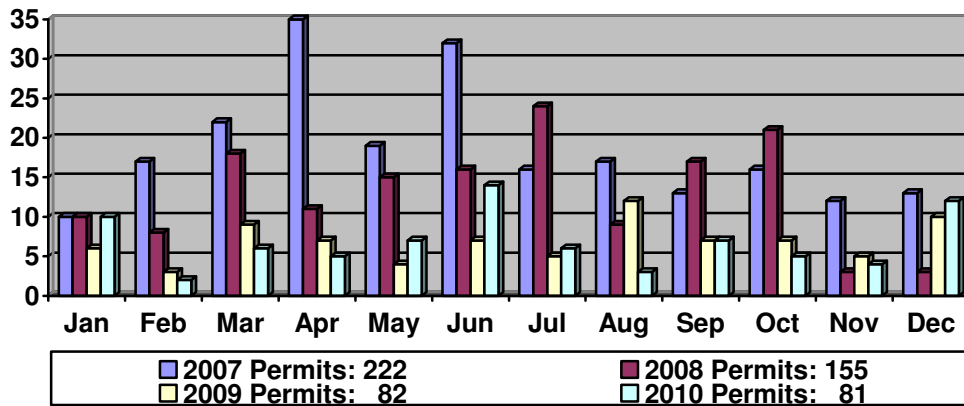
The Department not only issues permits for the construction of new subsurface sewage disposal systems but, also for the upgrade or enlargement of existing systems, and the repair and/or replacement of malfunctioning and failing systems. In addition to the above-noted

processes associated with permitting new systems, Department personnel are also involved with the evaluation of individual site plans and building floor plans to ensure that a proposed structure is in compliance with applicable rules, regulations and approvals. For existing systems that are failing and malfunctioning, the Department personnel are charged with investigating, evaluating and prescribing remedies to fix those problems.

Anyone constructing, altering, extending, modifying, or repairing, either alternative or conventional subsurface sewage disposal systems within Williamson County, must hold a valid *Construction Permit* issued by the Department. The recipient of a permit for construction of a system (i.e., the property owner or builder) is held responsible for adhering to the construction requirements of the *Regulations*. In 2010, new construction permit activity held at prior year numbers, which was somewhat encouraging considering prior year declines. The Department issued a total of 81 permits for the construction of new subsurface sewage disposal systems in the County, only one (1) less than issued in 2009. Prior year's permits totaled 82 which represented a 47% decrease from the 155 permits issued in 2008. See Figure 9 below.

Figure 9

New Septic System Construction Permits



Through a series of steps, the department determines the type of septic system that is appropriate for use with the construction of a new structure, and for expansion or modification of an existing structure. System type is determined by the soil conditions of the property, number of bedrooms in the structure, and whether or not oversized bathing fixtures will be included in residential construction; commercial structures are evaluated by proposed use and other factors. In 2010, conventional permits represented 59% of all new septic system construction, versus 61% in 2009.

The consumer affinity for oversized Jacuzzi or garden tubs trended down in 2009, with only 44% of new construction permits including an oversized bathing fixture. However, in 2010, permits issued for systems with oversized tubs were virtually equal to permits for systems with standard bathing fixtures: 51% versus 49% respectively. Permits with oversized tubs represented 52% in 2008, and 68.5% in 2007. See Figures 10 and 11 following.

New Construction with Oversized versus Standard Tubs
 Figure 10

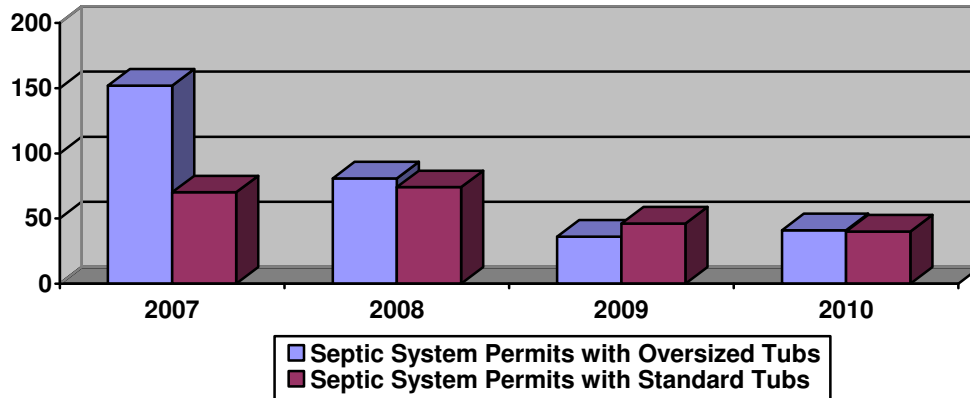
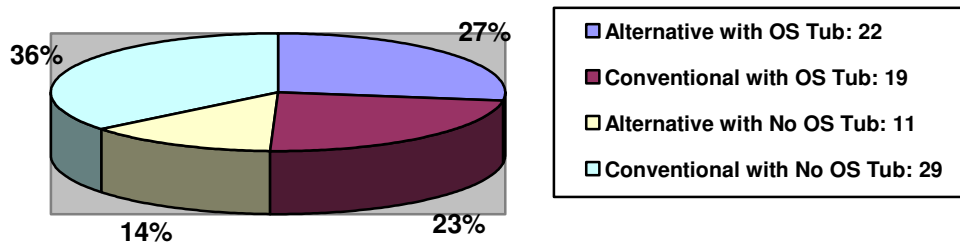


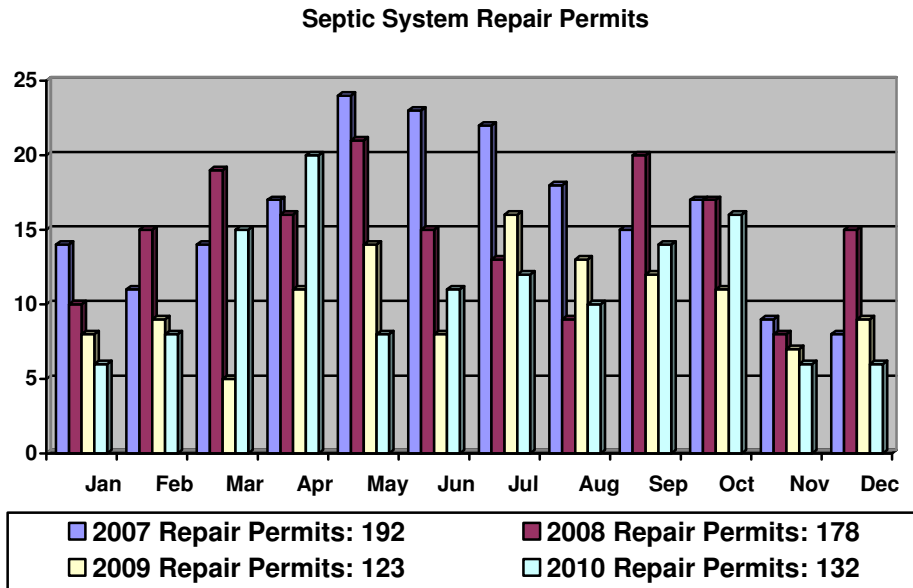
Figure 11

2010 Septic System Permits - New Construction



The Department has equal authority over the repair of existing systems, which may be required for a variety of reasons including upgrading non-conforming systems due to remodels and expansions of structures, and repairing failing systems which may be a threat to public health and/or the environment. The number of repair permits issued in Williamson County in 2010 rose from the previous year. In 2010, 132 repair permits were issued. 69 of those permits were issued to repair failing systems, and 63 permits were issued for other reasons. In 2009, 71 repair permits were written for septic system failures versus 52 system repairs for other reasons, totaling 123 repair permits. In 2007 and 2008, repair permits issued numbered 192 and 178 respectively. See Figure 12 below.

Figure 12

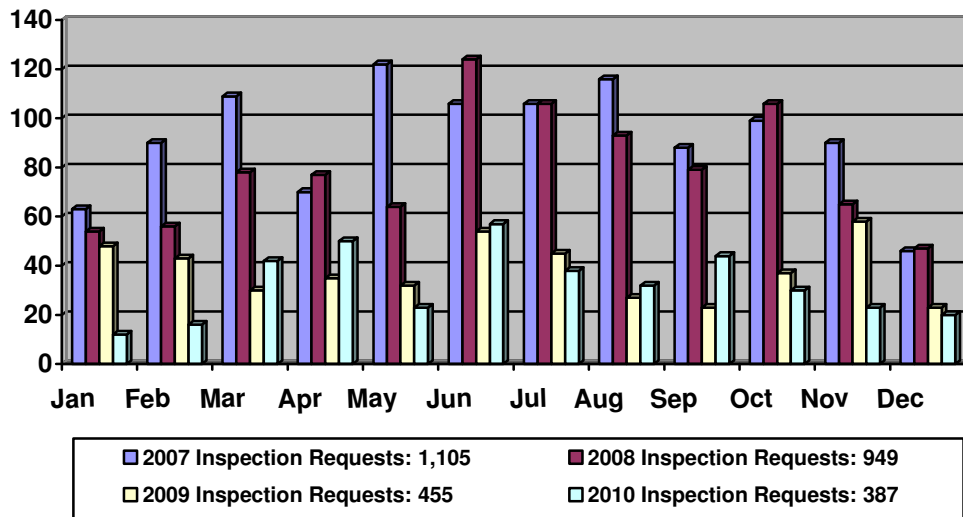


System Inspections

During the actual installation of new systems and the repair, modification or upgrade of existing systems, the Department’s inspection personnel oversee all construction related activities. System installations must be supervised from start to finish and the County *Regulations* detail a very rigorous inspection process at various stages throughout the installation to ensure adherence to all applicable regulations, permit details and construction standards. The number of inspections required depends upon the complexity of the system or repair. In 2010, approximately 387 inspections were formally requested versus 455 inspections in 2009, 949 in 2008, and 1,105 in 2007. Thus in 2010, an average of 1.56 inspections was formally requested per day, a decrease of 15% from the prior year. This figure does not include inspections not called in to the Department’s inspection coordinator, and repeat inspections. See Figure 13 below.

Figure 13

Septic System Inspection Requests

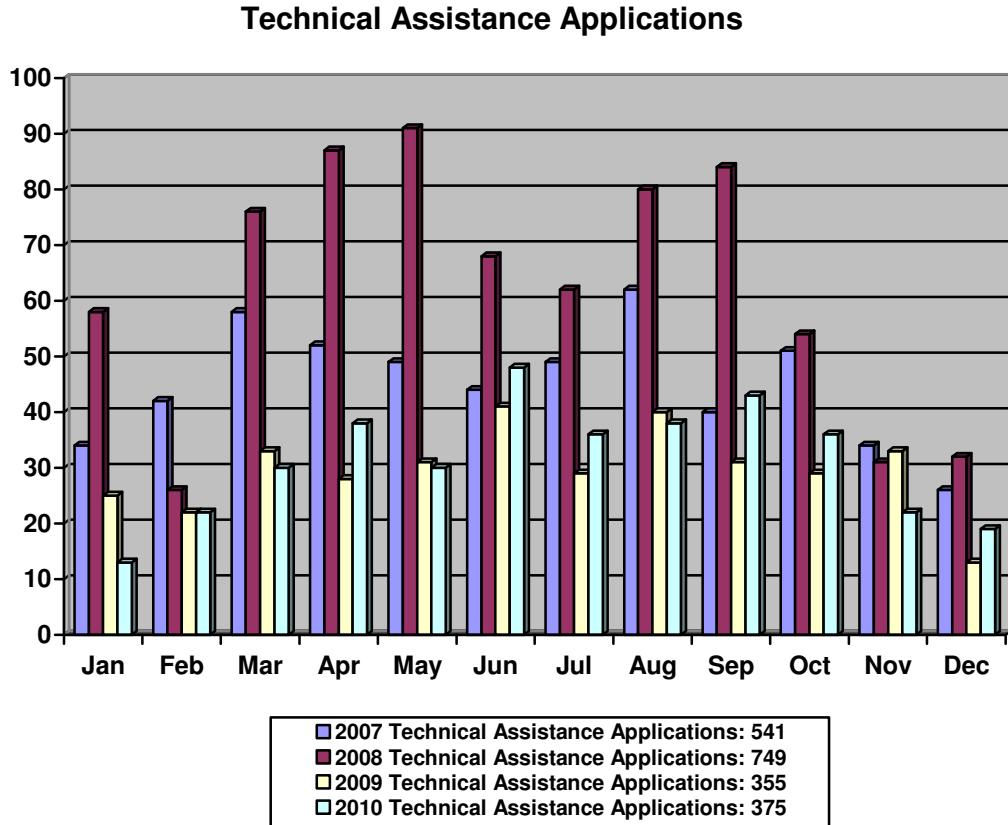


After all inspections are completed and final approval is granted to a system installation, whether new or repaired, the Department will issue a *Certificate of Completion*. In 2010, approximately 134 *Certificate of Completions* were issued by the Department, versus approximately 187 in 2009, a decrease of 28%. In 2008, 296 were issued. Only after issuance of such certificate may a property owner receive a *Certificate of Occupancy* for that structure from the Building Codes Department.

Other Department Services

Any modification to a property serviced by a subsurface sewage disposal system in Williamson County automatically triggers the completion of a *Technical Assistance Application* with the Department, an on-site inspection by a Department staff member, review of pertinent documentation, and approval by the Department, whether or not an actual septic permit is required. Typical modifications include projects such as swimming pools, attached or detached garages, out buildings (e.g., sheds, barns, etc.), sunrooms, patios, decks, porches, and other minor external or internal remodeling or cosmetic improvements. In 2010, the Department processed 375 *Technical Assistance Applications* versus 355 in 2009, an increase of 5%; a positive trend from the 53% decrease experienced in 2009. 541 applications were processed in 2007, and 749 in 2008. Refer to Figure 14 below.

Figure 14



Included in the Technical Assistance group are two community services the Department provides for the convenience of the public. One of these, system recertification, has become increasingly important and numerous in the past few years because of recent state legislation placing liability on realtors, or sellers of real estate, for the misrepresentation of compatibility of a home's size (i.e. number of bedrooms) with its septic system permit restrictions. In 2010, the Department made 34 recertification inspections versus 40 in 2009, and 30 in 2008. The second service, collecting and processing water samples for the purpose of identifying various contaminants in wells, springs and other private drinking water sources, requires the on-site collection of a sample by a Department Inspector. Processing of the specimen is completed by a state laboratory within seven (7) to ten (10) days, which is followed by written notification of the results to the applicant. Six (6) water samples were gathered by the Department for analysis in 2010, versus three (3) in both 2009 and 2008.

The Department provides a number of services that do not have fees directly associated with them, and therefore, have not been reported in previous annual reports. Sometimes these services are requested as a result of natural phenomena. Beginning April 30, 2010, and for the next several days, Williamson County experienced a major disaster caused by massive flooding. During the recovery, Williamson County Sewage Disposal Management processed 66 *Technical Assistance Applications* directly related to the flood. Fees for services were waived, and recovery projects were fast tracked through the review and approval process to minimize costs and frustrations for the victims.

Homeowners who have suffered losses due to burnouts or tornadoes are also not charged fees to process permits to repair or rebuild their homes. The Department processed five (5) applications in 2009 for repairing damage due to the February 2008 tornado, and an additional two (2) for burned homes. In 2010, the Department processed three (3) applications to repair damage from the 2008 tornado, and an additional seven (7) applications for construction due to fire damage.

Additionally, homeowners hooking to sewer and abandoning their septic systems must comply with County Regulations specifying the manner in which the tank is rendered unusable, in order to address public health concerns. Although verification of proper abandonment procedures is required, no fees are assessed to homeowners for inspections of abandoned tanks. A total of eleven (11) tank abandonments were inspected in 2010.

Finally, lot checks, flagging of existing systems, field sketches of sites, etc., are services often required during the review of Plats or SSDS Location Maps; and, soil surveys are performed by the Department for landowners who meet certain criteria and want to build a residence for themselves on their own properties. Fees for these services are not charged individually, but rather are included as a portion of permit or plat review fees. In 2010, the Department completed approximately 69 lot checks and 29 soil surveys, versus 68 lot checks and 31 soil surveys done in 2009.

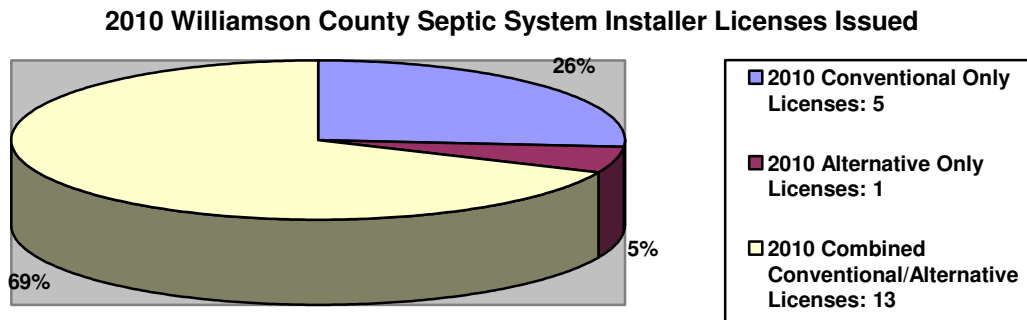
Licensing of Septic System Installers

Construction, modification, or repairs of subsurface sewage disposal systems within Williamson County may only be conducted by persons holding a valid installers license and identification card issued by the Department of Sewage Disposal Management. The Department issues three types of installer licenses: Conventional, Alternative, and Conventional and Alternative. Persons wishing to be licensed in Williamson County must:

- Obtain the corresponding licenses through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Ground Water Protection;
- Provide a Letter of Credit or Surety Bond;
- Pay an annual license fee;
- Demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding of the Department's *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems*; and
- Successfully complete a probationary period under the direct supervision of the Department.

Installers must renew their licenses with TDEC-GWP and the Department annually. In 2010, the Department issued nineteen (19) installer licenses, the same number as issued in 2009, which was a 3% decrease from the 2008 total of 27. Thirteen (13) of the installer licenses were Conventional and Alternative, five (5) Conventional only, and one (1) Alternative only. Please see Figure 15 following.

Figure 15



Pumpers

The Department has regulatory authority over all septic tank pumping contractors conducting business in Williamson County. This includes the permitting of individuals allowed to conduct such operations as well as oversight to ensure the proper disposal of all collected septage. Although the Department does not require a separate County license for pumping contractors to operate in Williamson County, they are required to provide the Department with a valid copy of their state *Septic Tank Pumper Permit* issued by TDEC-GWP. Additionally, they are required to file with the Department a valid copy of their *Wastewater Discharge Permit for Wastewater Haulers* with a wastewater treatment facility approved by the TDEC Division of Water Pollution Control (TDEC-WPC).

Miscellaneous

The Department also has regulatory authority over all product and technology approvals proposed for use in conjunction with on-site wastewater systems in Williamson County. Department staff reviews such proposals on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Department Checklists

At the end of 2007, the Department committed to develop a series of written guidelines for distribution to the public. Development of the checklists began in 2008, and continued through 2010. 2009 saw the completion of nine (9) different forms created for the purpose of guiding applicants through the Department's various and sometimes daunting processes required to obtain approval for modification of parcels of land serviced by subsurface sewage disposal systems.

In 2010, the Department then began a tedious review of inspection guidelines for septic system installations in the County Regulations, in order to re-write the inspection checklists used on site by staff for each type of system installation (*i.e.*, Conventional, LPP, MLPP, Experimental, and Repair). This endeavor was initiated to streamline and standardize inspection procedures, provide an instrument for more detailed and thorough recording of information, add a level of transparency, and to increase staff accountability. Those checklists were successfully completed, tested in the field, and fully implemented in 2010.

Regulations – Amendments & Review

The current Departmental *Regulations* have now been in place for over ten (10) years. During that time only a few minor edits and revisions have been made. There are numerous areas of the *Regulations* in need of revisions and adjustments. While some of these are minor, others may be more involved.

In 2009, the Department began the process of identifying and addressing any immediate needs associated with the *Regulations*, with the subsequent intentions to transform it into more of a “working” document with ongoing annual reviews and revisions. Smith Seckman Reid, Inc. (SSR) consulting firm was selected to conduct a thorough review and the associated outreach in order to critique the *Regulations*. After conducting public hearings with various stakeholder groups, comparing the Williamson County Regulations with state regulations, and after discussions with staff to address identified concerns, SSR compiled their findings and recommendations into a report to present to the Department and BOH in January 2011.

SSR’s recommendations to the Department included the following:

- Increase communication with contractors and applicants by developing a system for Web-based tracking of project applications and steps to approval that will assist in providing a sense of transparency for the entire review and approval process.
- Maintain consistency by continuing the training of Departmental employees to provide a consistent approach to the inspection and review process; and update checklists developed over the last two years to account for changes in Department practices.
- Improve coordination of work flow with applicants by developing a flow chart to provide an easy-to-follow guide through the approval process.

In addition, SSR concluded that the County *Regulations* are clear and concise, and did not need to be revised currently. Moving forward in 2011, implementation of SSR’s recommendations is expected to take place in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the Department and its processes, while continuing to protect the health and welfare of Williamson County citizens. The Department will explore and begin to develop additional tools to improve transparency, clarity and consistency in communications with the public.

Meadowgreen/Grassland Area Sanitary Sewer Construction Project

In April 2009, the County partnered with the City of Franklin to coordinate the Meadowgreen/Grassland Area Sanitary Sewer Construction Project. This project was undertaken to provide relief to neighborhoods sustaining historical septic system failures. The subdivisions designated in the sewer project include Farmington, Hillsboro Acres, East Side of Berry’s Chapel Road, and Meadowgreen in Franklin. Coordinated by Smith Seckman Reid, Inc. consulting firm (SSR), the 18 month public infrastructure construction started in July 2009. Homeowners connecting to sewer are required to properly abandon their existing subsurface sewage disposal systems according to Williamson County Regulations. Proper abandonment requires a final inspection by the Williamson County Department of Sewage Disposal Management to ensure all conditions are met. Sewer construction is scheduled to be completed during the Winter of 2011, pending testing of the lines. The sewer assessment and availability of connection to the City of Franklin Sewer System should occur in the Spring of 2011. The Department of Sewage Disposal Management is continuing to work

with all parties involved with the sewer construction project to ensure a smooth transition from septic to sewer.

Commendations

In 2010, several Department employees reached goals, participated in activities, and received industry recognition worthy of acknowledgement.

In January 2010, Kevin Raley renewed his status as Registered Professional Soil Scientist through the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists, and as Certified Professional Soil Scientist and Certified Professional Soil Classifier through ARCPACS/ASA. He completed his second year of a 3-year term on the Council of Soil Science Examiners (CSSE) for the development of the ARCPACS Fundamentals & Professional Practice Examinations required for certification and licensure of soil scientists. Mr. Raley continued to fulfill his responsibilities as Secretary/Treasurer of the Soil Scientists' Association of Tennessee (SSAT), and completed his second year of a three-year term as Director Representing Soil Scientists to the Tennessee On-site Wastewater Association (TOWA). He also obtained his Professional Geologist License through the Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance.

Department Director Brian K. Corwin, completed his term as Treasurer on the Tennessee On-Site Wastewater Association (TOWA) Board of Directors, and was elected to a 3-year term representing the Middle Tennessee area. This is his eleventh consecutive year serving on the TOWA board, with past positions including Secretary, President, Treasurer and Regulator Representative. Mr. Corwin remained the Secretary and Treasurer for The Tennessee Section of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers, a position he has held since 1999. He returned as guest lecturer for the Career Opportunities Class at the University of Tennessee Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, a class he has taught every fall since 1998.

Office Manager Heather Baskette completed the County Officials Certificate Training Program in 2010, a program administered by the University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service, and received the Certified Public Administrator designation. The COCTP offers comprehensive knowledge of the inner workings of county government to afford graduates a better understanding of the county as an entity, and provides specialized administrative, management and leadership training to help them run their offices more effectively.

Department Goals for 2011

The Department of Sewage Disposal Management has established a number of goals for the upcoming year. Department management and staff will continue to evaluate the Department's internal organizational structure and to improve utilization of the technology initiatives begun previously. In addition, the Department will review and update its regulations, practices and procedures in accordance with the SSR *Report to Williamson County Board of Health*, and will maintain its focus on providing friendly, efficient and effective customer service and transparency of Department work flow.

Although the Department's goals for the *Laserfiche* project (a work-flow and document storage software program initiated in 2007) have not been achieved, Sewage Disposal Management remains hopeful that 2011 will see a new and earnest emphasis on development of the software which will encompass the following objectives:

- Designing electronic forms, which would allow information about a parcel to be keyed at the time of collection into a shared database electronically, improving clerical efficiency and allowing instant interdepartmental access.
- Converting and transferring existing electronic database information into *Laserfiche* to preserve historical data on parcels.
- Developing procedures to begin scanning and electronically archiving newly created and existing property information into the *Laserfiche* system to reduce physical storage requirements and improve records retention and retrieve-ability.
- Developing the Department's own workflow tracking unit to track projects through its unique processes and services.

High speed, sophisticated *Laserfiche* compatible scanning equipment, which will accommodate various paper formats, is already in place in anticipation of implementing the above electronic filing, archiving, and records retention goals.

Although desired for several years, the Department hopes to work with the County Attorney in 2011, to develop an official Records Retention Policy in accordance with Williamson County Public Records Commission guidelines. That process will define the procedures required to begin identifying, preparing, and processing qualifying documents into the *Laserfiche* archiving system. Specific laws and regulations must be followed with regard to the archiving and disposal of various government documents and records. Due to the ever decreasing storage space for paper records and files, coupled with the implementation of new electronic storage technology, this issue is of critical importance to the Department.

In 2009, full implementation of global positioning system (GPS) equipment and AutoCAD (Computer Aided Drafting) software was realized, allowing the Department to gather precise information in the field, view and manipulate the data electronically, and memorialize it in permanent electronic files, enabling Department staff to make more informed decisions with a greater degree of certainty. In 2010, the Department began the development of additional applications for this technology, including the design and implementation of an electronic version of the *As-Built* drawing and *Certificate of Completion* for septic system installations, site inspection sketches, and *Technical Assistance* drawings which are currently hand-drawn. In addition, Department Management and staff began discussions regarding the reorganization and standardization of its electronic file management structure. This important work will continue in 2011.

Finally, in the upcoming year, the Department pledges to continue its core work of administering the County's *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems* in a thorough and equitable manner in order to protect the health and well being of the public, the groundwater and surface water resources, and the quality of the environment of Williamson County. Additionally, the department staff will strive to improve technology, procedures, and services, to ensure processing of septic system related projects in a timely and efficient manner.