

SEPTIC to SEWER

Informational Needs and Perceptions of Florida Residents



The purpose of this study was to examine the Florida public's perceptions, informational needs and informational delivery preferences regarding septic to sewer conversion. This information will assist local governments in facilitating homeowners' conversion from an onsite wastewater treatment system to a centralized sewer system. This study was conducted in October 2020 with 517 Florida homeowners who currently use a septic system as their wastewater treatment system.

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO CONVERSION

Respondents were asked about their perceived external and internal barriers to converting from a septic system to a sewer system. The external barriers reported most were lack of availability of a sewer hook-up in their area, up-front financial costs and costs of monthly sewer bills.

The internal barriers reported most were a lack of desire to convert, a lack of clear benefits to conversion and not having enough information about homeowner responsibilities in the conversion process.

In reference to the perceived barrier of up-front costs, 79.1% of respondents indicated they were more likely to convert to a sewer system if up-front costs were dispersed over time.

WOULD YOU CONVERT TO A SEWER SYSTEM IF THE UP-FRONT COSTS WERE DISPERSED OVER TIME?



■ YES — 79.1%
■ NO — 20.9%

PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF CONVERSION

When asked about their perceived benefits of converting from a septic to sewer system, respondents agreed most that converting from a septic system to sewer system reduces maintenance burdens on homeowners, frees up land for other purposes, increases property values and is better for human health.

When asked how useful various informational topics about septic to sewer conversion would be to them, respondents identified the most useful topics as: timelines of construction for conversion projects, community programs or regulations, costs associated with conversion, evidence-based benefits for the environment and evidence-based benefits for homeowners.

MOST USEFUL SEPTIC TO SEWER TOPICS

- 1 Timelines of construction for septic to sewer conversion projects
- 2 Programs and regulations for community septic to sewer projects
- 3 Costs associated with septic to sewer conversion projects
- 4 Evidence-based benefits for the environment
- 5 Evidence-based benefits for homeowners

Respondents found mailed print materials, websites and short online videos to be the most useful methods of delivery for receiving information about septic to sewer conversion.

PREFERRED FORMATS OF SEPTIC TO SEWER INFORMATION DELIVERY



MAILED PRINT MATERIALS



WEBSITES



SHORT ONLINE VIDEOS

Rampold, S. D., Krinsky, L., Telg, R. W., & Warner, L. (2021). Florida homeowners' knowledge, perceptions, and informational needs regarding septic to sewer conversion. PIE2020/21-05. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.

