

**ON-SITE MEETING 10/30/01**  
**CENTRAL VERMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BERLIN, VERMONT**  
**COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

1. *Comment: 90% of towns in Vermont currently don't qualify to use the site conditions on the effective date of the rule. They don't have the planning, zoning and ordinances in place.*  
Reply: The Agency is trying to separate science and land planning and towns will need time to adjust.
2. *Q: Can towns who are not ready choose to wait to implement the rule?*  
A: Towns will have 5 years to prepare (work with the Regional Planning Commission, adopt a sewage ordinance, restructure zoning bylaws and have subdivision regulations in place.)
3. *Comment: These rules could result in "controlled growth" or "uncontrolled growth."*
4. *Comment: The state should provide resources for the town to prepare for this.*
5. *Comment: The towns may actually have a reduced role when the state takes jurisdiction of 10+ acre lots.*
6. *Q: What about duplication? Are we making this process easier?*  
A: The state wants to get to the point where either the state issues a permit or the town issues a permit. These rules do not change what is happening now. Two permits may still be needed.
7. *Q: Are towns required to have zoning in place or just a sewage ordinance?*  
A: 4 elements are needed to use the new site conditions: work with the Regional Planning Commission to develop a plan, adopt a sewage ordinance, restructure zoning bylaws and have subdivision regulations in place. Towns can elect not to approve a state permit.
8. *Comment: People get town permits without realizing they also need a state permit and vice versa.*
9. *Q: What about pre-existing exemptions?*  
A: Pre-existing lots are still exempt. You can create 10-acre lots for a period of time and remain exempt if the house is substantially complete on the effective date of this rule.
10. *Q: What if I already have a state permit?*  
A: State permits issued in the past are still valid and will be in the future.
11. *Q: Can pre-treated effluent be discharged to mound systems to use minimum site conditions.*  
A: Yes
12. *Q: Why can't the designer decide how many bedrooms are in a house and design a system accordingly? Why does "bedroom" need to be defined?*  
A: Bedrooms are the standard way to design a septic system so there should be a definition in the rule, but the agency still needs to work on the proposed definition.

13. *Q: If someone chooses to use composting toilets as an innovative system, can there be a reduction in the design flow?*  
A: The concern is that the toilets will be retro-fitted with conventional toilets and the system will then be under-designed. If the system is a mound system that poses another problem as mound systems are harder to “expand” to accommodate the increased design flow. The Agency is working on a solution.
14. *Q: What is the time frame for a manufacturer’s technology to obtain approval for use in the state of Vermont?*  
A: That depends on the information the manufacturer has for the product. Some will only take a few months, others may take years if they do not have the data needed to approve their technology.
15. *Q: If S-27 passes will the 10-acre loophole still close?*  
A: Yes. If S-27 passes, the technical standards will stay the same, but the administrative part will change.
16. *Comment: If you were exempt before, you are exempt now. If you have a permit and you want to expand you will need a permit. “Once in it, always in it.”*
17. *Q: Do these rules apply if you are in a watershed?*  
A: Yes, unless a town has more stringent regulations these rules apply no matter where you are.
18. *Comment: Is opening all of this land for development in Vermont really a good thing? Perhaps some of these changes should be phased in slowly once they are proven to work.*
19. *Q: Is the Agency going to use soil morphology instead of percolation tests?*  
A: The Agency would like to move in that direction but it requires training and oversight which we do not have right now.
20. *Q: What is the cost of a desk-top hydrogeologic study?*  
A: Fairly inexpensive.
21. *Q: Will a seasonal camp conversion require a permit?*  
A: If there is an existing permit you will need to get a permit for the conversion. If the camp is a single family residence and it is on an exempt lot it is still exempt.