

According to the engineering study by Jones, Petrie & Rafinski, there are 627 dwelling units in the Latonka, Lawrence Lake, Mill Pond Service Area, that includes Cook, Myers and Holem Lakes and is designated as PSA 1 by the Marshall County Clean Water Task Force. Less than 30% of those homes have documented septic systems. Some homesites are as small as 1/5 of an acre with no options for repair or replacement of their on-site systems. Others may have adequate on-site space, but have conflicting improvements, wells, or neighboring wells. Seventy percent of the land area has a USDA rating of "Very Limited" for sustaining septic systems. If a homeowner's septic system fails, it could make their home uninhabitable.

I believe strongly that new sewer systems are needed around the lakes and in the other 12 Priority Service Areas identified by the Marshall County Clean Water Task Force. I volunteered to serve on the Marshall County Regional Sewer District board because of my commitment to clean water and a healthy environment to live.

In September, 1984, my now ex-husband and I purchased a piece of property that contained an old fishing cottage at Cook Lake. This is the property on which I still live year-round. When we closed on the sale, we had \$2.84 left in our checking account. We moved in with our blended family of five children and within a week, sewage backed up in the downstairs bathroom. The realtor had assured us that the septic system worked and showed us where the system cleanout was located. We started digging where the septic "system" was indicated, and discovered it was nothing more than a 55-gallon drum with a discharge into the adjacent wetlands.

We borrowed money from my parents and installed a septic tank and leach field. Over the years, we made many improvements to the property as we could afford it, including the demolition of the old cottage and construction of the current dwelling. In 2013, I needed to obtain a building permit for certain improvements. The septic system that was installed in 1984 didn't meet current code, and needed to be replaced. I spent a considerable amount of time with the health department officer, an excavation company and a soil scientist discussing the options that I had for placement of a new system. An area was identified where a leach field could be built, unfortunately, I did not own that property. My neighbor reluctantly sold me a quarter acre that allowed installation of an approved leach field. After soil

tests, surveys, land acquisition and construction, a septic system that met code was completed in 2017. This system will likely function properly for the rest of my lifetime. However, I have every intention of hooking up to the new sewer because I believe that it is the right thing to do for the future benefit of a clean and healthy environment.