



TOWN OF CHILMARK  
CHILMARK, MASSACHUSETTS

**Board of Health**

401 Middle Road  
Post Office Box 119  
Chilmark, MA 02535  
Tel: (508) 645-2105  
Fax (508) 645-2110  
E-mail: [boh@chilmarkma.gov](mailto:boh@chilmarkma.gov)  
Hours: 9am to 2pm, M-F

To: Chilmark Board of Selectmen  
On: February 9, 2016  
Fm: Chilmark Board of Health

Re: Menemsha Bathhouse renovation

At its meeting of February 3, 2016, the Board of Health held a discussion with engineer Kent Healy regarding ramifications of the proposed renovation of the Menemsha Bath House.

The septic system serving the bath house is functioning well under current use levels with careful management and at least two pumpouts per season. However, any significant increase in use could threaten to overwhelm the existing system, triggering a costly upgrade. In addition, the sustainability of water use from the well should also be taken into consideration.

The Board is concerned that, even if the number of shower stalls, sinks, and toilets remains the same, a renovation could inspire people to use the facility more intensively, thus increasing water use and wastewater disposal beyond sustainable limits.

To ensure extended use of the existing septic system, the Board would like to recommend the following:

- Waterless urinals in the men's room;
- Dual-flush toilets throughout the facility;
- Self-regulating faucets;
- Low-flow showerheads and timed use (in addition, the town could consider providing a price-incentive for sparing use of water: the first 5 minutes are low-cost, the next 5 would cost more, and the price goes up in increments the longer the shower runs);
- Septic-friendly toilet paper;
- Clear directives to the public about what *not* to flush down the toilet.

In order to be effective, these and similar measures must be accompanied by active observation of the system and conscientious maintenance.

If it appears that the current estimate of a maximum of 3,000 gpd may be exceeded with any frequency in the future, the Board recommends extending the leaching field to accommodate additional flow.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Carroll".

Katherine L. Carroll,  
Chair, Chilmark Board of Health