After months of negotiations with the state health department regarding a change to the local onsite wastewater system regulations, members of the Northeast Colorado Board of Health made a decision to remove wording, rather than fine tune it.

The decision came during the Wednesday, June 24 meeting, and was a result of the state health department's recent rejection of a proposed change in wording from the Northeast Colorado Health Department.

The wording is in regards to current local regulations that stipulate that for each dwelling, a property owner must have a minimum of two and one-half acres available to install a new or to repair or replace an existing septic system if there is a well also located on the property.

In January, Morgan County Commissioner and board member Jon Becker, told fellow board members his county was experiencing conflicts with the two and a half acre requirement. He cited examples of old homesteads that have been parceled off where two houses may now reside on two and one-half acres or less; resulting in a situation that would be in violation of NCHD's current regulations.

At the time the board decided to try to rewrite a portion of the regulations to include a provision where counties could provide an exception to that two and a half acre minimum for existing sites when deemed appropriate.

"The two and a half acre minimum lot requirement in the local regulations is much more stringent than what is currently in state statute," said Julie McCaleb, NCHD's environmental health director.

"That portion of the local regulations was passed back in 1987 and it really is obsolete now. With the removal of this language, septic systems still have to adhere to the set back requirements in state law; however, counties can still retain a minimum lot size in their local land use regulations if they desire. Basically this puts the authority of determining lot size back in the hands of the counties where it belongs, while still meeting the requirements of state law."

Board of Health makes changes to onsite wastewater regulations

Written by H	Holyoke	Enterprise
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Board members decided rather than continuing to contract with the agency's legal counsel to negotiate wording that the state would agree to, they would remove the wording concerning the two and a half acre regulation completely and have the local regulations mirror state statute.
In other business the board:
—accepted the 2008 audit, which was completed by Littjohann, Kauffman and Pederson.
—ratified the purchase of two refrigerators and one freezer, all pharmaceutical-grade, to house NCHD's vaccine supply. The equipment was purchased with money from the state health department as well as funds from the agency's Emergency Preparedness and Response contract.
—listened to a proposal concerning swimming pool and spa safety. Members from NCHD's environmental health staff spoke with board members regarding swimming pool safety, as well as concern for disease transmission for improperly maintained pools. Staff presented the board with a proposal to begin an education campaign from July-December 2009 and the possibility of beginning charging fees for inspections in January, 2010. Board members voted to go ahead with the education initiative, but tabled the proposal for inspection fees until later in the year.
—approved signing a waiver to bypass the minimum qualifications for a public health director, as stipulated under the recent passage of SB194, otherwise known as the Public Health Revitalization Act.