



Barry County

TOST REVIEW RESPONSE SUMMARY EXCLUDING PHONE SURVEY RESULTS

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2017

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I. Online Survey Results

1. How complicated is the TOST process?

	Buyers 25	Prof. 68	Phone X
Very simple	24%	13%	
Somewhat simple	24%	32%	
Somewhat complicated	12%	41%	
Very complicated	36%	10%	
Refused/no answer	4%	3%	

2. How many days pass between the registered evaluator's initial inspection and approval to transfer the property? (Professionals asked 'In general, how many days pass between the registered evaluator's initial inspection and approval to transfer the property?')

	Buyers 25	Sellers 23	Prof. 68	Phone
0-7 days	28%	26%	15%	
8-14 days	16%	17%	38%	
15-21 days	8%	22%	15%	
21 -30 days	12%	4%	16%	
More than 30 days	36%	26%	15%	
Refused/no answer	0%	4%	1%	

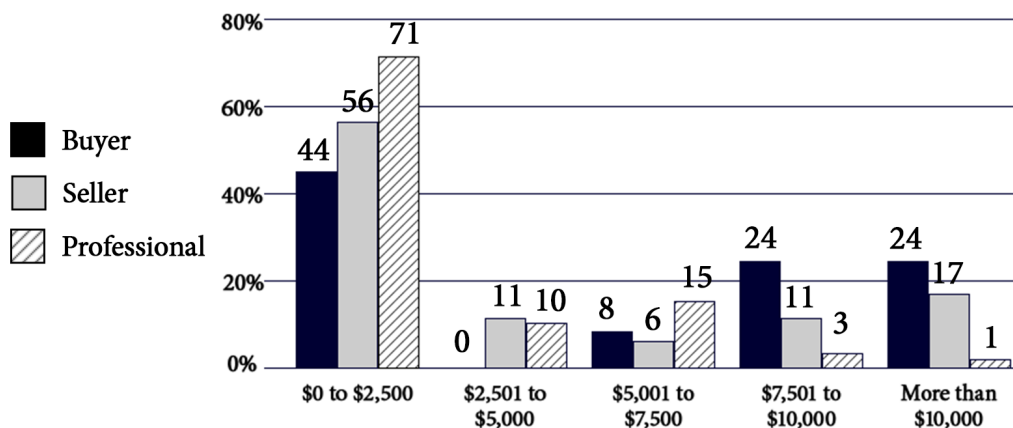
TOST Review Results Summary
Online Survey Results

3. After the well and septic system was inspected, what actions did the health department require?

		Well	Drain field	Septic tank
Buyers (25)	No action required	52%	44%	52%
	Maintenance/minor repair	12%	8%	8%
	Major repairs	4%	4%	4%
	New system	28%	20%	24%
	Refused/no answer	4%	4%	4%
Sellers (21)	No action required	62%	48%	43%
	Maintenance/minor repair	19%	0%	10%
	Major repairs	5%	0%	0%
	New system	14%	29%	14%
	Refused/no answer	0%	10%	10%
Phone	No action required			
	Maintenance/minor repair			
	Major repairs			
	New system			
	Refused/no answer			

4. Regardless of who paid for them, what was the total cost of repairs and/or improvements? (Professionals asked 'On properties you deal with, what is the average cost of repairs/improvements required by the health department?')

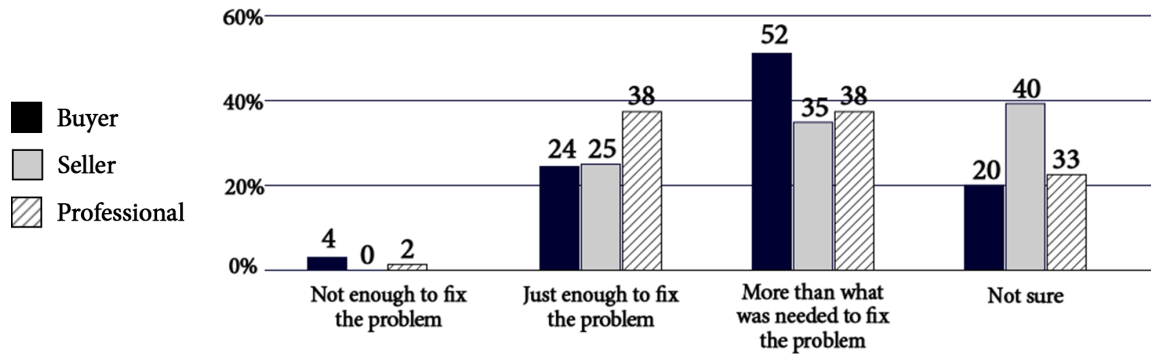
Breakdown of Reported Cost of Repairs



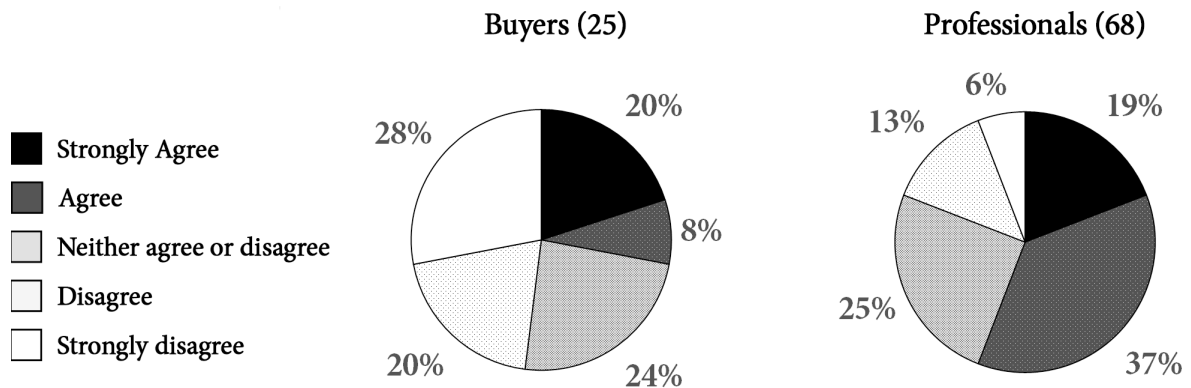
TOST Review Results Summary
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5. The health department's required repairs/improvements were:
(Professionals asked 'For residents you interact with, the costs of required repair/improvements are typically')

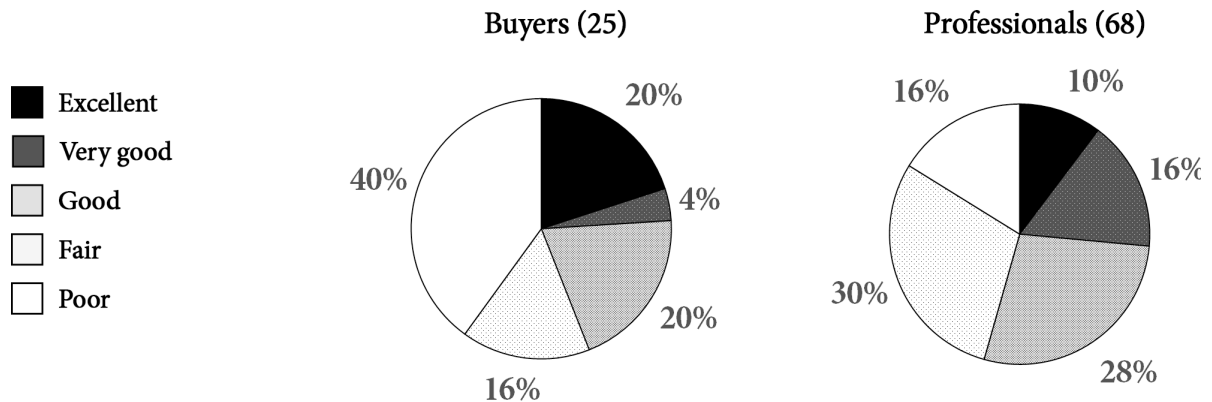
Breakdown of Opinions of Reported Repairs



6. Health department staff members were/are helpful.



7. In general, how well does health department staff communicate with you during the TOST process?



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8. Please rank the following issues, in order of importance to you.

Average Issue Ranking

	Buyers	Sellers	Professionals	General Public
1st	Protecting the environment (2.52)	Keeping the public safe (2.05)	Keeping the public safe (2.35)	Keeping the public safe (2.38)
2nd	Reducing the financial burden on residents (2.71)	Reducing the financial burden on residents (2.37)	Reducing the financial burden on residents (2.54)	Reducing the financial burden on residents (2.53)
3rd	Keeping the public safe (2.82)	Protecting the environment (2.5)	Protecting the environment (2.98)	Protecting the environment (2.82)
4th	Protecting consumers from scammers (3.39)	Growing the local economy (3.79)	Growing the local economy (3.47)	Growing the local economy (3.56)
5th	Growing the local economy (3.64)	Protecting consumers from scammers (4.22)	Protecting consumers from scammers (3.63)	Protecting consumers from scammers (3.62)

Percentage of Responses by Ranking

		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	NA
Buyers (25)	Keeping the public safe	20	12	28	20	8	12
	Growing the local economy	12	8	24	16	40	0
	Reducing residents' financial burden	28	20	24	8	20	4
	Protecting the environment	24	28	16	16	8	8
	Protecting consumers from scammers	8	24	8	28	24	8
Sellers (21)	Keeping the public safe	38	29	14	0	10	10
	Growing the local economy	0	14	24	19	33	10
	Reducing residents' financial burden	38	5	29	14	5	10
	Protecting the environment	19	38	19	14	5	5
	Protecting consumers from scammers	5	5	38	38	14	0
Prof. (68)	Keeping the public safe	29	25	19	15	4	7
	Growing the local economy	7	16	15	32	21	9
	Reducing residents' financial burden	25	21	26	13	7	7
	Protecting the environment	21	18	13	19	19	10
	Protecting consumers from scammers	12	12	18	12	41	6
General Public (58)	Keeping the public safe	31	22	16	12	9	10
	Growing the local economy	2	16	24	28	21	10
	Reducing residents' financial burden	34	14	16	16	12	9
	Protecting the environment	14	26	19	17	10	14
	Protecting consumers from scammers	10	14	14	14	38	10

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9. In my opinion, enforcement action is warranted:

	Buyers 25	Sellers 21	Prof. 68	GP 58	Phone TBD
Any instance of a code violation	36%	24%	19%	29%	
Only if major pollution is impacting the water supply	52%	48%	56%	45%	
Never	4%	10%	3%	5%	
Other (please specify)	8%	19%	21%	19%	
Refused/no answer	0%	0%	1%	2%	

“Other” Enforcement Detailed Responses

Survey/Role	Enforcement criteria
General public	<i>On a case by case basis</i>
General public	<i>Major pollution needs to be defined by those other than the Health Department. Prior to TOST there was no evidence of any occurrence of the the water supply being impacted by a leaking septic system nor has there been since the regulation was imposed. The data from the health Department supports this statement.</i>
General public	<i>A serious code violation and major polluting only</i>
General public	<i>All Resendints Periodically Manatory. Not just TOST</i>
General public	<i>When a given condition negatively impacts the health or safety of the public or negatively impacts the quality of our natural resources including our groundwater and surface waters.</i>
General public	<i>Repeal this ordinance totally, prior system was fine</i>
General public	<i>YOU WANT TO RESTRICT HOME OWNERS BUT YOU CANT STOP OIL COMPANIES AND THE DEQ FROMFRACKING AND YOU WANT TO RESTRICT HOMEOWNERS FROM FREE ENTRPRISE TO MUCH REGLATIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS</i>
General public	<i>Depending upon the circumstances</i>
General public	<i>when health is threatened- individual or public</i>
General public	<i>Depending on what is being released and at what levels</i>
General public	<i>Common sense enforcement of code violations</i>
Home inspector/evaluator	<i>Whenever the violation can directly affect human health.</i>
Home inspector/evaluator	<i>Whenever there is a significant risk to Public Health or the environment</i>
Home inspector/evaluator	<i>When conditions exist which may affect the health of the individual or harm the environment</i>

TOST Review Results Summary
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Survey/Role	Enforecement critera
Other professional	<i>when the buyer and seller agree action needs to be taken. If the program stays in place, the findings should be given to both buyers, sellers and the realtors, and the decission to correct problems should be left to them. Who pays for it, what is not completed or is completed, what money is held in escrow, all of it. Protect them by giving them information, not by requiring something to be fixes when is not actually necessary or financially not possible; this is wrong.</i>
Other professional	<i>When there is a threat to health large or small. If a system is not functioning as intended and elevates risk</i>
Other professional	<i>Property owners should be able to buy/sell with governement telling them what they need to do. When processing mortgages the mortgage company can and do most times require these well and sepic test. Buy and seller should be able to choose what needs done and when it done.</i>
Realtor	<i>When necessary to bring a system to a safe working condition.</i>
Realtor	<i>I believe there is a middle ground between "any instance" of code violation and "major pollution: Perhaps some minor items can be recommended for repair but not a failure to allow property to transfer</i>
Realtor	<i>Case by case</i>
Realtor	<i>If a real health or safety issue for homeowner or neighbors</i>
Realtor	<i>Major Pollution and if the system is dysfunctional and unsafe to use</i>
Realtor	<i>When there is an issue that is truly a flaw in system.</i>
Seller	<i>The health department should not have the power to prevent or hold up a person who is selling their property.</i>
Seller	<i>We had already spent a lot of money to hook up to the local sewer, but still had to pay for TOST</i>
Seller	<i>YOUR SYSTEM IS RIDICULOUS AND REFLECT GREED AND IS A FAILURE TO COUNTY SYSTEMS OF SERVICE AND SENSIBLE COSTS, LET ALONE BUY-SELL OF REAL ESTATE. IF YOU DONT HAVE THE STAFF TO SERVICE YOUR SYSTEMS, CHANGE THE SYSTEM.</i>
Seller	<i>When the condition is a public health hazard</i>
Seller	<i>While inspection is always a good idea when purchasing a property, the sellers and buyers should be able to work out a reasonable solution that fits the need. If the buyer is willing to take the property as is and the seller doesn't have the funds to fix the problem why is it not something they can decide to work out?</i>
Seller	<i>When a complaint is filed</i>
Well driller	<i>Major issues need to be fixed for everyones benfit, codes are there for a reason not just to have a code.</i>
Well driller	<i>When public health is jepardized or for flagrant violations of code</i>

II. Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
BEDHD Structure	I think the Health Dept needs to answer to someone besides themselves, there needs to be a check & balance system
BEDHD Structure	There seems to be only one solution that they use & it's not the best one
BEDHD Structure	In the process of \$5000 repairs found that septic system in good order
BEDHD Structure	Survey should be enough
BEDHD Structure	My system passes code. Red flag and it's "because I can".
BEDHD Structure	New industry of residential evaluators and policies
BEDHD Structure	Subjective, not objective evaluation determines fate of property
BEDHD Structure	\$500-600 fee for letter of authorization.
BEDHD Structure	Doesn't guarantee system in future.
BEDHD Structure	Penalty and jail time?
BEDHD Structure	Health Dept. overreach
BEDHD Structure	Re-check. Building permit suggested instead of TOST.
BEDHD Structure	1.25 inch well; \$5000 upgrade for TOST
BEDHD Structure	Implementation issues: Health department and the way they do things; Discrepancies in how they carry out what they're doing; Whose responsibility is it for keeping them consistently; Why are we following the big guys; No liability for the way things are done
BEDHD Structure	The reason for the program is not working: Public Health department included problems with sewers, wells, septic tank, and well failing 2 days before new owners moved in; time to eliminate this program
BEDHD Structure	Health Department problems start at the top
BEDHD Structure	Lack of professionalism and common sense
BEDHD Structure	Realtor asking for second check on septic and drywall. Weekend use and did not want services requiring water and septic.
BEDHD Structure	Chlorinated problem six months later repeated itself
BEDHD Structure	\$400-600 and health department inspection that couldn't find the problem. Second inspection done.
BEDHD Structure	Held up construction of building by 2 months. Unnecessary septic after 2 months. Blackballed or held up indefinitely – buyers, sellers, contracts

TOST Review Results Summary
Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
BEDHD Structure	Public Health should be to serve not to soak
BEDHD Structure	Not fair to everybody
BEDHD Structure	Cost or time problems of implementation are heard.
BEDHD Structure	Health Dept has been good to work with even though the ordinance sucks
Board of Commissioners	I came hoping to hear much information that would be new to me. Unfortunately the public was assaulted by such horrible acoustics and audio system it was like listening to Charlie Brown's teacher – Wah, Wah, Wah.
Board of Commissioners	The only person you could understand was the facilitator. Is is so sad that this Commission is happy to charge us \$6000 to insult us, torture our ears, and show us just how little they respect the taxpayers by being so ill prepared and disorganized. I guess I'll have to wait for the book or movie.
Board of Commissioners	The majority of these speakers are not professionals. They are slow to speak, easily confused and get rattled easily. To expect them to get their points conveyed in a 3 minute time period is ridiculous... so what if you have to be here longer than you would like. It's what you get paid to do. --
Enforcement	TOST is unfairly enforced. Repeal it NOW!
Enforcement	The TOST ordinance required replacing my well at Thornapple Lk. In doing so, it moved the well from 36' to my septic to within 10' of adjacent property owner's septic tank. Where is the common sense of the departments?
Enforcement	I live in Barry Co and was forced into selling due to health and had to jump thru several hoops to get it sold. It cost me around \$10,000 and thankfully it worked out but to defy gravity is an absolute fail in common sense!!
Enforcement	Should it be considered reviewed on a yearly basis for all if it's for safe water? Enforcement
Enforcement	Fail to understand why we are doing this. Everyone every year should be inspected if justified.
Enforcement	3-4 inch down inspection with dry ground doesn't make sense
Environment	Watershed
Environment	Kalamazoo Watershed – continue to implement TOST program protecting groundwater
Environment	Untainted water supply for businesses and citizens
Environment	Adequate drinking water and adequate sewage disposal system
Environment	Conservation of natural resources protected

TOST Review Results Summary
Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
Environment	Constitutional obligation of TOST program
Environment	Protect our water integrity but the method has miniscule returns
Environment	Drink well water and recreate and own business that relies on water quality
Fees	Money grab by BEPHD.
Fees	My opinion is that its NOT a money issue. If they MAKE money its not fair to us citizens that it's a money making program. I don't think that it is.
Fees	If it DOESN'T make money then it's a waste of tax payer dollars. Only thing "fair" is revenue neutral. I doubt it is. Money is NOT the issue.
Fees	Solutions funded by those involved in the transaction
Fees	Why can't buyer and seller negotiate this between themselves? We can negotiate to get this done between buyer and seller
Fees	Don't understand why gov't involved
Health and Safety	How many cases of illness before TOST due to unsafe water? Since TOST?
Health and Safety	What was in place before TOST? Were there any health issues during that time?
Health and Safety	If you want to protect our water, stop allowing the gas & oil drillers and dumpers in our county.
Health and Safety	If there's a health concern we should fix it. We would agree we need to fix.
Other	I believe BEHD should focus on cleaning the lakes in our county. Case in point – put a sewer around Thornapple Lake.
Other	Show us (the public) the inspections on ALL sheriff DEEDS recorded in Barry Co. since 2007. They can't!
Other	How many bank owner properties paid for TOST?
Other	Can farmers legally pile semi-trucks of chicken and turkey manure on the surface for multiple years?
Other	Runaway Escrow fees. Without be factual back-up to support the HIGH ESCROW FEES. Who sets the fees?
Other	Why only 9 counties of 83 have TOST?
Other	Economic – Stagnant due to Housing start-up and sales
Other	Why Eaton wants out and Barry wants to stay?
Other	9% pay increase.
Other	Pleasant Shores??

TOST Review Results Summary
Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
Other	Board of Commissioners not doing anything about other wells
Other	Not a good deal for anyone in the County
Other	Will never buy in Barry County due to TOST
Other	Drain fields problems not discovered through TOST
Other	\$1400 fees due to TOST and no house on the property
Other	Have had houses held up year and a half due to TOST
Other	Eliminate please
Other	Keep inspector list
Property rights	My opinion is that its NOT a money issue. If they MAKE money its not fair to us citizens that it's a money making program. I don't think that it is.
Property rights	If it DOESN'T make money then it's a waste of tax payer dollars. Only thing "fair" is revenue neutral. I doubt it is. Money is NOT the issue. It's a property rights issue.
Property rights	Let buyer & seller work out details and cost. No fees to BEPHD
Property rights	Right to own real estate. Bundle of rights includes right to occupy use property, sell property in entirety or parts, right to lease.
Property rights	Unlawful search and seizure by Health Dept. and infringing on rights of the owner
Property rights	No due process
Property rights	Want to buy and sell my house without the help of the health department.
Property rights	Should be entitled to do that ourselves.
Regulations	How can government have the right to stop private sale for a 19 ' well producing "safe" water? TOST
Regulations	How can government have the right to stop a private sale for a corroded baffle on a septic tank? TOST
Regulations	Repeal TOST. The US Constitution protects our property from search without a warrant. I believe that TOST goes against the Constitution. I cannot sell my property unless I pay for a permit and an evaluator to come inspect my well & septic.
Regulations	No ordinance or resolution can supercede a statute.
Regulations	Do not support TOST
Regulations	Hindrance to Barry County as we progress; Don't need gov't regulation – homeowners can take responsibility
Regulations	No ordinance will raise power to supersede state statutes; Barry County's authority for TOST and also question jurisdiction.

TOST Review Results Summary
Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
Regulations	Cannot be complicit in third party interference;
Regulations	Cannot be communal; Cannot be arbitrary; Must be reasonable; Cannot be unreasonable; Cannot override individual health and welfare
Regulations	Unconstitutional
Regulations	TOST seen as an unlawful search and seizure by the County Government via the Health Department and an infringement on the rights of the owner. See printed handout for additional info.
Regulations	Boundless regulations on watersheds and wells
Regulations	Recognize that when our rights impact someone else and that's when government should protect each others' rights
Regulations	Protect people who live around us too
Regulations	I believe TOST is a regulation, not an ordinance. A regulation is short term. This has gone on for a long time.
Regulations	TOST is NOT an ordinance but a regulation.
Regulations	It is also not fair that Barry County Property owners with "City" water or sewer do not have to have their systems inspected.
Regulations	Inspection should include city houses, city sewers are contaminating river more than rural septic systems.
Repeal	Barry County Republican Party Resolution calling for the repeal of or making voluntary the TOST regulation. See printed handout for additional info.
Repeal	Rescind TOST. Farm Bureau – repeal 2007 TOST
Repeal	Non-binding resolution passed by County's Republican Party. Repeal or make voluntary transfer of TOST. Rescind
Repeal	TOST regulation or make it a voluntary process between a buyer and a seller
Repeal	Assumption of guilt since property owner needs to prove and pay for inspection
Supportive	I participated in the TOST program as the seller of a business in Prairieville Twp. The evaluator found that an abandoned fuel tank was too close to the wellhead, i.e. less than 10 feet. The buyer and I split the \$350 evaluation fee. We contacted various excavators & contracted for the removal of the oil tank for under \$1500. During this process, I had communication & contact with the BEPHD by online, email, & phone calls several times. They were very helpful every time and made suggestions and verbal commitments which allowed us to expedite the process.
Supportive	No more 50 gal barrels and gravel. Gone are the days of the 2 holer.

TOST Review Results Summary
Points Raised at Public Forum

Concern Area	Issue Raised
Supportive	Clean water & disposed of sewage are not too much to ask. Protect Barry County for all of us here and those to come and share our beauty & health!!
Supportive	Infrastructure doesn't last forever – it needs to be looked at, even if it is hidden. Inspectors have the skills to do this, whereas most home-owners do not.
Supportive	If no one can find a septic system, why should they assume it exists? If the landowner doesn't know where it is, it seems reasonable to ask to install one.

III. Comments from Individual Survey Responses

Response Key

Category	Code	Definition
RES - Resident	Y	Resident
	N	Non Resident
	BCR	BCR- Battle Creek
	C	Confidential
	DEL	Delton
CTY - City	HAS	Hastings
	MV	Middleville
	NV	Nashville
	PW	Plainwell
	WD	Woodland
SUR - Survey/Role	B	Buyer
	GP	Genreal Public
	P	Professional - Undisclosed
	PHI	Professional - Home Inspector
	PO	Professional - Other
	PR	Professional - Realtor
	PWD	Professional - Well Driller
	S	Seller

TOST Review Results Summary
Individual Survey Responses

SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42949.8550	Linda Vanderboegh	Y	HAS	B	It was a terrible experience dealing with the Barry County Health Dept. they treated us like s***.
42951.5323	Private	Y	C	B	I did not buy this house because of the problems that were pointed out. This was a very valuable service. It would have cost me so much money and I could not have afforded to make the repairs afterwards. Thank you so much.
42954.6164	Private	Y	C	S	The health department looked at a system that was performing with no problems and did threaten me at the time I was attempting to get the system approved for sale by telling me the house was out of compliance and I could be subject to fines and jail time. There was absolutely no malfunction to my system at all. They refused to consider any I offered as to the soundness of my system and demanded a completely new system or else they would not approve any sale or transfer of property. Despite what they claim when speaking to the board of commissioners, or the press, they strong arm and threaten innocent home owners into what they demand or they threaten to take us to court. They had me over the barrel. I was forced to comply with their demands or I would have never been allow to sell, rent or even live in my own home again.
42955.8929	Private	Y	C	GP	It was not well thought out by the County Board. It was sold to the commissioners as a program that would protect the lakes and streams from fertilizers, septic systems, and run off pollutants. What it has done, is put a burden on home sellers and buyers, caused excessive fines and costs for inspections, and has done nothing to clean up Thornapple Lake, which is a sewer that no one wants to fish or swim in. It is an organization without accountability, and has no one overseeing the inspection procedures.
42955.9442	Private	Y	C	GP	TOST is an essential part of a home sale, to ensure that the buyer of a home is getting the safe water supply that they naturally assume exists. I have personally seen children sickened by Giardia contaminated water consumed at their grandparents' home, from an untested well. I recall from my childhood the only partially successful efforts to eliminate raw sewage lines run directly to lakes from the lakeside houses. Failed septic systems are a public health hazard and need to be eliminated; TOST will do this on a gradual and ongoing basis. This TOST inspection is far less intrusive than the full building code inspection and bringing up to current code that all the cities in the Detroit metro area require before a sale. Nobody should ever buy a home in Barry county and then discover too late that the septic system is failing, or that the well is contaminated.
42955.9606	Private	Y	C	S	Dealing with the health department and their fees is the epitomy of bad customer service and confiscatory beuracracy
42955.9637	Private	Y	C	B	Dealing with the health department and their fees is the epitomy of bad customer service and lack of professionalism

TOST Review Results Summary
Individual Survey Responses

SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42956.6960	Private	Y	C	S	I see the need to protect our wayer supply. I do not have a problem with the tost regulations. I know there are sketchy septic systems out there, and those have the potential to polute my water. Who wants polluted water? If tome of sale is the opportunity for inspection, then so be it.
42956.7849	Jack Miner	Y	HAS	GP	We need an independent Health Dept. With the present structure of the BEDHD the will never be any possibility of cost effect TOST enforcement or any other Health Dept activity.
42956.8939	Private	N		GP	Why require this to be done when a buyer of a residence could have an inspection completed to do the same thing? Why add more regulation?
42956.9070	Private	Y	C	GP	All experts agree that water is going to be our most rare resource in the future. Requiring a prop- er working well and septic is not a lot to ask to protect our health and our water. Regarding the argument that the county loses financially due to TOST slowing up home sales; we need to look past the "here and now" and instead focus at the years down the road. The loss of SEV due to toilet bowl lakes that were allowed in past decades is far greater than the loss of a few home sales. Just compare the SEV for Gull Lake with the mess of homes with improper sewer around Thornapple Lake. TOST is a slow but sure way of turning that trend around, a bonus both environmentally and financially for the county.
42957.3447	Private	Y	C	S	Recommendations are OK. Issues should be settled between the buyer and seller. If the systems have worked fine for over 50 years, if the water tests OK and the septic is working, why make unneeded repairs to satisfy TOST?
42957.3729	Private	Y	C	GP	It's a known fact that old sewer systems or lack there of around lakes were in dire need of repair or replacement but with this TOST law, good septic systems that have worked and are working are all being replaced. I have not seen a home in Barry county sold with out replacing the septic system with a raised system at a very high cost. Where is any proof the new above ground systems will work any better then the systems they are replacing. The county health department has mandated systems for at over 50 years with no guarantee they would work nor is there any guarantee the new raised system will work. They are a very high expense and an eye sore only to replace systems that worked fine, in most cases. I know there is systems that need to be replace when a problem is found but not one home has been sold or transferred in Barry county as far as I know since TOST with out the very costly eye sore in the yard. TOST has gone beyond protection of the environment. More infrastructure and cost with more components to go wrong when not needed is not the answer. It seems easy for government to add large cost to a problem that could be fixed much cheaper. When a system has worked and is working, the extra cost imposed only because someone has the power to do that is insane. I think putting sewer systems in around our lakes in Barry county were needed. Imposing these large cost on rural properties that are not polluting are ridiculous. That's not to say there aren't systems in rural Barry county that need to be replaced but use some common sense. Not every system needs replacing.

TOST Review Results Summary
Individual Survey Responses

SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42957.4611	Private	Y	C	GP	Fees are far too expensive for modestly priced / valued properties.
42957.5364	Private	Y	C	GP	It should be evaluated based on it's effectiveness in protecting health- not based on how many people 'like' it. We seldom like what costs us money- even if it's important. Differentiate between concerns due to recent transactions- and those years old. Changes have been made to regulation/ implementation. Are the complaints that keep resurfacing from new complaints or rehashing the ones that prompted changes already made?
42957.9112	Peter Vandenbroeck	Y	HAS	GP	End TOST now. Remove the government from a private transaction between buyer and seller.
42958.0205	Nyla Rounds	Y	HAS	S	This Wayland address is in Yankee Springs Twp. In my case, I was selling my deceased parents' house. The nitrate test came in JUST 4 points higher than allowed. No one had lived in the house for nearly a year and our request for another test was refused. There were no other problems. The Health Dept Inspector told our realtor since it was the original well, it should be replaced anyway! Really!? He didn't have to pay for that new well for no reason! On the channel of Cobb Lake, the well driller ended up having to go over 200' to get water that passed. The well cost over \$8000..... that was after the huge discount Kraai gave us on labor and supplies. That is ridiculous!! That doesn't count the water inspection, well permit, etc. The problem could be eliminated with the installation of a reverse osmosis system for less than \$1500. We asked and that was refused. The HD Inspector said the new owners might forget to change the filter! Seriously!? The buyers were 50-something empty nesters.....no pregnant women, no babies. The Health Dept has no business in real estate transactions. Like a home inspection, well, septic & drain field issues should be between the seller and buyer. This happened in December 2014-Feb 2015 and it still gets my ire up.

TOST Review Results Summary
Individual Survey Responses

SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42958.4550	Private	Y	C	S	We had our home evaluated through the TOST program, but the sale fell through for other reasons (home did not meet requirements for FHA and buyer could not secure other financing). I was not sure which survey to fill out as the home technically did not sell. TOST was not available when we bought our home and I wish it was. We did not have our well and septic inspected at the time we bought the home, so had no idea where our drainfield was, or if the home had an approved system. After purchasing the home (which was in foreclosure when we bought it and had been vacant) we had to replace much of the plumbing as it had not been properly winterized (something we did not think of when buying in August). We also removed old fuel oil tanks that were leaking in the Michigan basement in close proximity to a sump that discharges to a creek. I feel these issues may have been caught by TOST. Having TOST protects buyers, the public and the environment. Several of our lakes and streams in Barry County have E Coli higher than recommended. I want my kids to enjoy the water and not be worried they are swimming/wading/fishing in water contaminated with human bacteria. Having the TOST program means Barry and Eaton County is eligible for grants that can cost share private residents expenses if their system is failing. https://www.michfb.com/MI/News/County_News/Ottawa/Septic_Assistance_Program_Ottawa_April_2015/ http://business.allendalechamber.org/news/details/funds-available-for-property-owners
42958.5168	Alan Brodbeck	Y	WD	B	It is a privilege to live in a rural area, and it is not always going to be cheap. If someone doesn't want to pay for adequate systems they should move to the city where such things are provided as a service. I don't want it to be cheap and attractive to live here - I encourage as many people to move to the city as I can. I do want it to be safe and peaceful here.
42958.5468	Private	Y	C	GP	TOST is an effective way of monitoring and eliminating non-point source pollution leaching into local water ways. The cost is minimal considering the impact.
42958.5613	Private	N		P	it is put on the report recommendations but not required repairs, this confuses the buyer and makes them think they are required. also Tost requirements on foreclosures that you cannot turn on utilities at is a hardship on any buyer that would like repair this property after close, Most people buying a foreclosure are not allowed by bank to do repairs and some banks will not do repairs so the Tost requirement stops sales by people that would like to buy and fix up properties
42958.6381	Private	Y	C	GP	If and when it comes time to sell my home, I hope TOST is obsolete. I maintain my septic system and well and do not wish to have any extra surcharges imposed on my residence by the County Health Dept.
42958.8125	Private	Y	C	P	Since I live and work in Barry County, I know the process and find it easy to do as long as it's started early in the transaction. It is more difficult for agents that are unfamiliar and wait until after the 10 day inspection period to get things scheduled. The TOST letters seem to be turned around quicker lately, less than a week. I really appreciate that!
42958.8776	Private	Y	C	P	Tost has been a good thing for our environment and protecting our ground water.

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42958.9389	Josh West	N		GP	The biggest issue with toast I see is the cost to submit to the county when an evaluation is conducted. I think that toast is a fantastic idea I just don't think the cost should be as high to submit which in turn would lower the cost for those wanting to sell their home.
42958.9487	Justin Peck	Y		PR	Health Dept. staff have started to ease up on full failures of correctly functioning systems. There may be issues with systems that could be fixed, but don't pose an immediate public health concern and should be at the negotiation table between buyer and seller. There should be easier and quicker options for us to review any property records to help in the whole process. Some office staff and sanitarians have been less than stellar at giving status updates on review process.
42959.2094	Private	Y	C	B	I think we should be like most counties and drop tost
42959.2887	Dennis Zank	N		PO	I feel the program is having a good impact on the environment. What the public conceives is the cost and delays to the home buyer and seller during the real estate transaction. In the eight years I have worked with the program I have seen several major impacts to the environment and safety concerns. Items like sewage on the ground surface, one was two days after an open house, well head damage, the renters have been getting sick drinking the water, sewage being discharges to the directly to the Grand River, septic tanks in such condition they pose a major safety hazard. I know that these major problems are a small percentage of the total evaluations, but if it help to clean up the environment and prevents someone from dying it's worth it. My biggest issue is the conformance letter in trying to make it more readable it became to hard to read.
42959.5394	Private	Y	C	S	This is the best public health protection program in the State of Michigan and Barry County should be proud of the program and its excellent results. The staff of the Health Department are doing their job, preventing disease, prolonging your life and promoting public health!
42959.5472	Ronald Barch	Y	HAS	GP	I support the TOST program and believe it is of paramount importance to the welfare of Barry Co.
42959.5878	Private	Y	C	P	Cost has risen to an inappropriate level. It is a burden to pay so much for a report. When there is problem or just to get an approval, the Health Department can hold up the working of the transaction. They are 2 weeks out for just reviewing a report done by someone else. Not efficient and way too costly. I sell in other counties and the cost is less than half of what we are charged for the same service.
42959.7308	Wes Knollenberg	Y	DEL	GP	One of the most important tools available at the county level for protecting our water quality, particularly our lakes and streams.

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42960.3210	Private	Y	C	GP	Believe TOST was started with good intentions, however as a former REALTOR I've experienced Buyers and Sellers (at extreme costs) have had to replace systems that could have been fixed versus total new systems being required by the Health Dept. to be replaced. TOST has become too expensive both for permits and installations of otherwise usable systems. If the Health Dept. is charging as much as they do for Permits and Fee's then the County Commissioners should reduce it's funding to this Dept and make it "self supporting".
42960.3290	Private	Y	C	GP	I think the government is going too far in being able to interfere with the sale of private property, especially at the critical stage of the transaction.
42960.4915	Charles Wickham	Y	DEL	GP	Health Dept. should be more concerned with impact on drinking water from over fertilizing crop-lands, raising nitrate levels, than with private real estate sales. If a buyer wants systems evaluated let them pay, or if a lending institution requires it, put it in their closing costs, using a contractor of their choice. Health Dept. should be concerned with new construction and codes.
42960.7071	Private	N		P	It has been so frustrating working with Barry County that if at all possible I try not to sell houses in that area. They make you feel like you are just a number at the bottom of the page and they will get to your request when they can. They say they are under staffed. All realtors know how difficult it is to work with them.
42960.7099	Private	Y	C	B	Way too much time in between first test results and what was required and then to have them back after the repair was made.
42960.7763	Private	Y	C	B	We were required to put in a raised septic system. The system in place was fine, over worked by too many people living there during the inspection. The inspection was done during rainy spring season in a clay soil environment. Totally unnecessary in our instance. Save the expensive system replacements for those that are truly failed.
42960.8514	Private	Y	C	B	This dn't cover the problem i had my system passed inspection. but was still red flagged. because the sewer pipe was 11 feet from the well. 10 feet is within code. Now if i ever sell my house it will not be approved because of the red flag. I ask the inspector why if its within code did he red flag it. and he said because he could and there is nothing i can do about it. that's the kind of people you have running it. thank you.
42960.8779	Private	Y	C	GP	Buyers should have the right to make an educated choice when they purchase a home. It is not the local government's job to stick their nose in sales of property.

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42961.3532	Private	Y	C	P	I appreciate the TOST program and believe it is a good thing even though it can be a burden on a Seller if a new well or septic is needed. I feel not all sanitarians are the same and appreciate the ones that are easy to talk to and will take the time to explain or help resolve issues that come up and especially return a phone call or answer an email when needed. Adding time to a sales transaction by not responding at least once a day is frustrating, because you also have inspectors, lenders, appraisers, assessors etc that are also adding time to the transaction and it is cumulative. I feel all sanitarians should have a time set each day to respond to inquiries(Most do).
42961.3691	Private	Y	C	P	Almost all transactions involve a lender who requires the same testing for a home sale. TOST is redundant and over reaching.
42961.5691	Robert Schirmer	Y	HAS	GP	Water and septic systems need more frequent inspection and stringent remediation. Conducting inspections only at the time of sale has identified significant problems threatening provision of safe, clean water. In the first three years of the program, 22% of wells and 26% of sewage systems had issues. Incredibly, 78 water samples were contaminated with bacteria (feces) and 27 were contaminated with chemicals (nitrates). Private wells and septic systems are not private-their proper function is necessary to protect their neighbors, the public, and the environment. Providing safe, clean water is an absolute government obligation-whether that is protecting the aquifer from chemicals used in fracking, or protecting my drinking water source from my neighbor's feces and the farmer's manure and fertilizers. The response to the findings from the first 3 years of TOST should be a call to action by the commissioners and the health department-more frequent inspections and more remediation. I have lived on a lake undergoing eutrophication for over 40 years. My neighbor, whose lot line is 10 feet from my home, has lived in her home since the 1950s. Under TOST, our water and septic systems have never been inspected. The first three years of TOST have demonstrated that ensuring safe, clean water in Barry County is not a theoretical public health issue. Fulfill your government obligation. Take responsibility for ensuring safe, clean water for your residents.
42961.6842	Private	Y	C	GP	I believe it is important to keep our lakes & river from pollution. The water from our well must meet codes & our Septic system must be in working order, When the sell or transfer of property the well & septic must be in working order that's the only way we can keep Barry county rivers & lakes clean and not harmful to the public.
42961.8550	Private	Y	C	P	I think its time for the short term rentals in residential zoning. With a minimum of 30 day rentals. While its nice to have the revenue in July and August. It would be even better to have it the additional 10 months as well. These unlicensed and unregulated mini resorts need to be controlled and regulated.

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42961.9758	Private	N		P	Had a pending sale on a seasonal cottage that tested good on water and septic. Stab Well was older but deep enough. Would not pass TOST as neighbor had a chemical toilet and Heath Department did not know where neighbors sink drained. There was no problem with anything but because the neighbor had an old system they could not document they would not pass as old well might be too close.... Sale was cancelled and seller ate the money for the inspections and had to keep home. Big overkill on seasonal cottage.
42962.0793	Private	N		P	Since i deal with surrounding counties as well. I can honestly say Barry and Eaton are by far the worst. Most counties do not require any inspection. If they do, they only require contamination repairs. While I have seen the benefit, I also think we live in a free country and it should be up to the home owner not the county.
42962.2047	Michal Enders	Y	MV	GP	We need clean water.
42962.4039	Michael Trahan (Castleton Township Official)	Y	NV	GP	1. Poor explanations as to how the program works and its fees by over zealous employees. 2. Established ESCROW that are not checked out via existing records , "well replacement" amounts without checking out county records to know likely cost. Well people can use as reference (public record) why cant the person behind the desk ? 5 -- comments from public 3. Barry county Commissioners put this in with good intentions but forgot about the people factor of program. Since the inceptions we are one of "9" Counties to adopt the TOST program, sounds line we need to "GET OUT".. Barry County is not the County Of Choice for people moving to consider (lack of population growth and "TAX BASE"). This is the opinion of 6 different REALTORS / 3 from inside Barry county and 3 from outside Barry County that also say that the same home outside Barry County will bring a better sale price for sellers. 8. TIME FOR A CHANGE !!
42962.4211	Private	Y	C	P	There are times that dept. requirements are a little to strict as in dry wells are not allowed in any new systems.
42962.4608	Vicki Prieskorn	N		PR	I wish more counties had this same program
42962.4795	Private	Y	C	GP	I feel its a unnecessary cost, We have way to many costs to buy or sell a house as it is, and this added more to it. From what I hear , often TOST finds fault and it costs thousands of dollars to a home owner. And I hear that most new drain fields have to be above ground, I dont understand the reasoning
42962.4871	Private	Y	C	P	The repairs normally request are VERY expensive, and very untimely. The staff is typically helpful, but the issue is sometimes the repairs are a gigantic financial burden to some of my clients. Also some financing does not allow for closing in escrow, so being able to do the repairs on a promissory note would be helpful in those cases.

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42962.5451	Private	Y	C	P	very disappointed in the staff that deal with TOAST. I have contacted staff with questions for customers and get only voice mail and get no answer back from them at all. Customers that come into the Register of Deeds Office are very unhappy with the serves they are not receiving at the health department and the rules and regulations required of them. TOAST needs to go. Be gone. Citizens will take care of the problems, government does not need to tell land owners what they need to do or not do. Some property owners just need to sell property as is do to hard time and should not be held to government refusing to allow them to sell. My opinion TOAST need to go.
42962.5845	Private	N		P	I have been satisfied with Barry and Eaton County staff!
42962.5878	Private	Y	C	B	We live in an area in which we must connect to the public sewer if our septic system fails by TOST. We believe that this shouldn't be required--it should be the home owners choice of replacement/repair.
42962.6890	Private	Y	C	S	I think TOST is a good law in concept. My concern is that modern homes like mine that was inspected only 4 years ago may not warrant a full inspection. When my septic system was inspected, the evaluator commented, "This looks just like brand new!" With the house being only 15 years old, it really should still look new. I wonder if there could be a tiered structure where a less involved, less expensive review could take place with newer homes, or those that have been recently inspected (within the past 5 years). It seems like \$900 spent to inspect a system over the course of 4 years is excessive (my purchase of the home + my sale).
42962.6994	Private	Y	C	GP	Most places that have sprouted burial mounds had septic systems that have functioned adequately for as long as 50 years. Those who have dealt with the health department report that the folks making these determinations have no clue what they are looking for but "they will know it when they see it". This indicates to me that this is in the category of a government "boondoggle" that is protecting health department jobs, not public health. Having watched what is going on, it looks like having blow sand is the only way not to have a burial mound sprout up in your yard. I supported TOST when it first was proposed because it was advertised s necessary to clean up the pollution around our lakes. It needs to go back to that original thought. If the present staff of the health department can't stomach that, they need to find other employment.
42962.8269	Erv Gambee	N		GP	I live on the Thornapple River, We enjoy water activities including Kayaking, Fishing and swimming. We want to do so in pollution free water that flows to us from Barry County. Please Help us make sure sewage is not entering our waterways.
42962.8708	Mark Monger	N		PR	Always had an agreeable experience with this process.
42962.9462	Private	Y	C	GP	I believe this has created an undue burden on the citizens of Barry County in a time that has become a financial hardship for many.

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42963.3975	Tim Weingartz	Y	MV	B	Most, if not all of the question on this survey don't get to the problems with Tost. The Tost inspiration, payed for by the seller. Sale happen. Buyers take possession, finds a problem. Money spent on toat did not protect byers, selers, or the ground water.
42963.4724	Steven Buer	Y			I believe the TOST program has been excellent in documenting well/septic information on properties. Barry County now has best records on properties of any county in West Michigan that I have dealt with. I believe TOST has been beneficial in providing information to homebuyers about the status of the well/septic systems at the homes they are purchasing so homeowners are informed buyers. I believe TOST program has improved the status of many well & septic systems. I cannot say if the program has actually averted any health issues with any homeowners, but TOST has corrected many potentials for health issues and well/septic system integrity issues. I believe it would be a mistake to scrap the program. I believe TOST needs some tweaking to allow "as is property sales" under certain conditions. I cannot speak to the financial sufficiency of the TOST program. I was a TOST inspector for several years and am familiar with TOST as we deal with TOST almost on a daily basis in our business.
42964.5279	Private	Y	C	GP	NOT A GOOD PROGRAM THE GOVERNORMENT NEEDS TO STICK THERE NOSE OUT OF PEOPLES BUSNIESS AND GO BACK TO THE CONSTITUTION AND NO MORE TOST . THERE SHOULD BE A INSURANC YOU CAN BUY SO IF THERE IS A PROBLEM IT IS COIV-ERED TO PROTECT THE HOME OWNER AND THE BUYER
42964.5397	Kenneth Kornheiser	Y	PW	S	There was a question asking the time duration from inspection to approval, but it did not differentiate between situations in which there was a straight approval and there was approval after a required correction.
42964.6434	Patricia Johns	Y	MV	GP	It is my responsibility as a homeowner that when I sell my home it is safe for the new homeowners. I would have my well and septic system inspected before selling and do not need to be forced to do so. I wonder if those who don't want to comply don't care if their water is safe to drink and just want to let new owners deal with any problems.
42965.3450	Cheryl Howlett	Y	HAS	B	Without the TOST program we wouldnever have been able to purchase our home. This programm forced the bank to fix the drainfield before they could sell it off. I think this program is necessary for unsuspecting buyers so they are protected from immediate repairs after thwnpurchase of a home, as homeowners often know there is a problem and don't want to fix them.

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42965.5198	Larry Case	Y	HAS	GP	I have been a lifelong resident of Barry Co and live on property that has been in the family for 5 generations. My neighbor built his own house and skirted many of the local ordinances. Ten years later when the house was foreclosed on, the home and septic system were inspected prior to sale. The septic was found to be faulty after only 10 years which didn't surprise me since so many short-cuts were taken in the construction of the house. The septic is near my property line and close to a wetland that feeds West Creek that goes through Fish Hatchery Park. Without TOST, this system would have been discharging into my property and into the creek for who knows how long. Please do not weaken the TOST program to the point we go backwards on protecting the environment and the property rights of others. I'm guessing that the majority of people that respond to this survey feel it is a burden on them. I'm asking the Commission to keep that in mind and challenge you to find a solution that safeguards public health and our environment. Thanks for asking for my input!
42965.6225	Private	Y	C	B	they required the well to be replaced because it was to close to septic system however the new location is 15ft from adjacent property while old location was 35ft from the existing system. I can control what is being put onto the system on my property I can't control what the adjacent property owner does. I feel that Barry county should be on its own so that we only replace systems if a test actually shows problem to you or adjacent property.
42965.7662	Private	Y	C	B	We were more than willing to do whatever it took to have the well and septic inspected before purchase, even if we had moved to a county where pre-sale inspection was not required. We purchased a home in Barry County after moving here from Flint. Having safe water and a properly functioning septic system were our top priorities.
42967.8574	Private	Y	C	GP	If Barry County Board of Commissioner are truly interested in listening to the resident of Barry County. Then NOW is the time to eliminate the TOST program in Barry County, if this means 2 separate Health Departments then so be it. This has been going on since the beginning of the TOST program and all we keep hearing is their way of doing things. They are still failing systems that MAY FAIL. They are NOT FAILING systems that SHOULD HAVE FAILED, costing the new home owner THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS. This program was designed to help those young kids just starting out, to prevent them from shelling out THOUSANDS after buying their new house. Well that's not working in either case. The appeal process does not work, when you appeal to the same people that are causing the issues in the first place and costing those appealing even more money. Those cases need to be appealed to the County Board of Commissioners. Let's get this eliminated in Barry County NOW and stop wasting more Tax Dollars. WHY ARE YOU ASKING FOR THE PERSONS NAME AND ADDRESSES. THIS IS PREVENTING A LOT OF PEOPLE FROM TAKING THE SURVEY OR AT LEAST THOSE WITH THE REAL PROBLEMS AND AFRAID OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT COMING AFTER THEM

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42968.4907	Richard Sewart	N		PR	Tost reduces property values, increases marketing time, and gives buyers a reason to locate outside the boundary. It is a predatory practice that only benefits those who profit from it. It is a toxic practice that artificially reduces property values. It is nearly impossible to comply in winter season. I can not stress enough how bad TOST is to the other property owners.
42968.5061	Private	Y	C	B	I paid \$6000 for my house and 3 acres in 2013 and was required to spend \$15000-20000 for an above ground system while local farmers pile semi-truck loads of turkey and chicken manure in their fields for multiple years. I live alone and own 250 acres. Am I or the farmers causing the most pollution?
42968.5985	Deb Young	Y		PR	At first I wasn't sure how it worked by reading the instructions on line. It did not seem clear enough to me so I had to call them to walk me through it.
42969.4292	Ananda Jenkins	Y	DEL	B	I think that the TOST program is needed and benefits us all within the county. There are many issues that go unchecked without some periodic review by professionals and a time of transfer is a good time to do so. It protects the potential buyers from an unknown cost in the future because of a failing system.
42969.4385	Ananda Jenkins	Y	DEL	S	I fully support the TOST program, it's needed to protect buyers and the community at large from failing septic and wells. We're a community with numerous lakes that everyone knows have had old septic/drain fields pumping right into them, TOST is a great way to fix such issues. The inspectors fees were reasonable, however the health department's 'permit/processing fee' is unwarranted. It's a government agency that's already funded to do this job so it's not appropriate for them to charge additional fees especially since they're not performing the inspection nor assessing the viability of the well/septic/drain field only completing the small amount of paperwork. If anything, the health department's fee should be eliminated as it appears to be an additional tax rather than serving any real need.
42969.4796	Private	Y	C	S	We didn't sell our house, we couldn't because we had our price to include the cost of a new drain-field. And why should I have to put in a new system for over \$10,000 if it works just fine for myself and my family? My concern is for my family, when you buy a house you have to be realistic and realize things may stop working at any moment. It shouldn't be the sellers responsibly . If we want Barry county to grow and prosper as a county, perhaps it would a good idea not to make it so hard to buy or sell a house. I had multiple realtors tell me that barry and Eaton counties are the hardest to deal with and they avoid it at all costs. Is that really what we want to be known for?
42969.6657	Private	Y	C	GP	TOST is a revenue generating initiative. Major spills from Grand Rapids impact our water supply more in one year than the sum total of private systems.
42969.7613	Private	Y	C	S	realtor had ran water over night, before inspection. Well good drywell had water . Inspected by H/D next day and empty. asked for hearing and got but would not change initial verdict, after realtor gave explanation.

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42969.8789	Al Strouse	Y	HAS	GP	It is totally unreasonable in that when you KNOW you have a bad drain field and will replace it when selling the house, it then makes absolutely no sense to have to pay a Department Health Fee, then a professional fee for inspection(which can override the decision of the health department) and so on,, and then added to that is having to put money in escrow with the health department until a new septic is installed. Buyers and sellers should have the option without interference and over reach of the government in how they want to negotiate a septic field or even a well. TOST needs to go,, it is mostly a revenue producing program.. Buyers and sellers of property are intelligent enough to decide on who or how the septic/well is to be checked, replaced or repair. Disclosure requirements are already part of the law in selling a house as well.
42969.9107	Keith Heide	Y	NV	GP	TOST should be eliminated in the entire state of Michigan.
42969.9746	Private	Y	C	S	I knew before selling that work would need to be done, but I had to pay to have the inspector tell the health department what we already knew. The system needed some work, but the replacement wasn't necessary for either environmental or public safety reasons and I was forced to pay the whole cost and have a lot of extra money tied up in escrow.
42970.3227	Private	Y	C	GP	REPEAL, this goes way beyond "health and welfare of residents and the environment:.
42970.4279	Jackie Schmitz	Y	MV	GP	TOST is a no brained! I can't imagine not getting my septic pumped on a regular basis. I would never consider buying a home without checking on the septic system. It is the cost of owning a home.
42970.5245	Carol Price	Y	DEL	GP	US Constitution: Amendment 4: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, paper, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized. TOST assumes we are guilty, until WE pay, to prove we are innocent. They they hold a property transfer hostage, until THEY say we can exercise our RIGHTS.

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42970.6869	Jay Vanstee	N	NV	GP	I live in Eaton county, (across the road from Barry) but I work in Barry, and my family, including my brother, mother and father, and in-laws and many friends all live in Barry county. I have recreated in Barry county for more than 30 years. The TOST program identifies buried and otherwise virtually undetectable public health nuisances and offers a convenient method to get them repaired, thus improving the quality of life for all residents and visitors. In the absence of the TOST regulation, these failed and failing septic systems are often left in service long after they have become a health nuisance to the public as there is no local or state requirement for any ongoing evaluation or maintenance of these critical private facilities after they are installed. The surface waters of Barry county and of our entire state have been shown to be adversely impacted by improperly treated human waste as a result of improperly installed and maintained on-site wastewater disposal systems. The local conservation districts have sampled many of the streams and rivers in Barry and surrounding counties and they are finding unacceptable and unsafe levels of E. Coli bacteria almost everywhere they look. Check the facts if you don't believe me. The local Sanitary Code and Nuisance Code, contrary to what some have been saying publicly, have no evaluation and or maintenance provisions in them for onsite systems and if a nuisance condition is somehow identified, often the only provision for those that cannot afford repairs is to vacate their home. In the absence of a thorough and detailed evaluation, improperly designed and/or operated wastewater disposal systems are virtually impossible to detect and will continue to spew untreated sewage into our lakes and streams without recourse. As the population density of Barry county increases, these issues are becoming more and more apparent and the negative affects are costing all of us. A few people with failed or failing septic systems are polluting our shared environment with their sewage. The TOST program is the only thing holding them accountable for their actions that adversely affect the community as a whole.
42971.4350	Private	N		P	People need to look at this whole process differently. If you had a house listed for 100,000 and received a building inspection that listed a refrigerator that did not work. At that point you would either lower the price of the house for a new fridge or the seller would buy a new fridge to bring the value up to the implied 100,000. There is no difference between that example and a well or septic system. The problem is most of the general public does not understand when a well or septic is functioning correctly or if it is at increased risk for health issues. That is where the health department comes in to offer that expertise. If people looked at a well or septic like they did a fridge then they would understand that the 100,000 price tag is wrong. It is based on the belief that the home has all working systems. TOST is not costing people money. This is money they would be spending if they know the value of these parts of their home like a fridge. They would want them replaced. However, since plenty of people don't put value in these things then they will not get done. People won't do the right thing and that is why there is a regulation to require it when it is needed.

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42971.5012	Private	Y	C	S	Farm sold with life lease and system previously approved installation by Heath officials, Filed land Contract to get exception-approved for 10 years
42971.5067	Private	Y	C	GP	Many residents and churches never sell and I known of many that just drain into farm tile. Inspections should be mandatory for all residents, not just TOST
42971.5086	M Fruchey	Y	NV	GP	It's all about a bunch of unqualified County Personnel trying to upgrade their jobs. If a system works leave it alone. if the water is safe leave it alone. Don't try to make a problem out of something that is not a problem.
42971.7238	Heidi Bryant	N		PO	The processes are very cumbersome and when relief systems or wells are needed those processes are often more complicated and time consuming. Service to the taxpayer does not seem to be a priority or service to themselves. They should look at how Kalamazoo County Environmental Health does their permit processes, they seem to be the best in southwest Michigan. We work in 6 Counties and this is the most unorganized and daunting county to work in. We have had them pass systems with sewage on the ground.
42972.4016	Private	N		P	After some initial issues the health dept. seems to have smoothed the process out and outcomes of the inspections are appropriate
42972.5945	Becky Olmstead	Y		PO	My personal experience with the program is very known by the Health Department, and although they were not able to resolve any issues, they were attentive to my situation. The fault in the program lies with the inspector, Joel Hamilton, and the seller, who did not properly disclose information. My experience as it relates to work, I have seen things that needed to be required to be fixed, that were justified, not necessary, and money held to fix things or if things are later needed to be fixed after later investigations. I have heard many complaints from buyers, sellers and realtors, of the time and money that is put into this program, that is not necessary. As stated above, I am not against the program, I feel the intent is great, protect buyers. However, the program should strictly inform the buyer and not require sellers to be penalized when they often don't have the means to complete repairs required to sell their house. This has resulted in people not being able to sell their houses, still not getting the repairs, and additional financial issues sometimes if they cannot sell (foreclosure). I have also been involved in lending and involved with the program and the lender only requires inspections because the county does. For the homes I've done loans for outside of Barry and Eaton counties, this is not required. Less control would work wonders for the program...and you'd still get the income (and probably less work).
42972.6360	Private	Y	C	P	I have dealt with this in business and personal. Hugh cost personally, we were required to install a new drain field, which in my opinion they are raised and take away from the "curb appeal" and look awful with a hill in the middle of the yard. Business it can be very costly to the sellers of a home. If there is no money to fix what is required, the deal is done.

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42972.6998	Private	Y	C	GP	There are a lot of wells and lakes in the area and I think it's very important to keep our water sources clean. While people find it frustrating to have their homes updated, I believe the government is responsible for enforcing these codes that are in the best interest for the public and environment.
42972.7075	Private	N		P	The tost computer system is a cumbersome tool.
42972.8216	John Uramkin	Y	HAS	GP	I think this has turned into a money grab by the county. I thought all the members of our board were conservatives. This program is not the action of conservatives. As a buyer if I want a survey done, I'll pay for it. Get rid of this program now.
42972.8532	David Dilno	Y	HAS	GP	I don't feel TOST is necessary! Rescind TOST! Heath dept just bullies the people in the county with no checks and balances. I had a engineer design a system and health dept just did everything to add cost and drag approval out for eight months!
42973.3512	Private	N		P	This program is too much government overreach. The inspection costs are ridiculously expensive. It's just gotten to be a cash cow in the eyes of the public. There are a large number of residents that simply cannot afford this .
42974.5191	Donna Moesta	Y	HAS	GP	If people are in power positions of TOST are in place and levy unnecessary monetary hardship on a resident, they should be fined the amount of the monetary hardship plus fines set by the community not the board. All action against a good standing resident of the community should be put to a community vote and not the board. Violations should only be dealt with people who have a professional level of understand of the issue and not have the intent to financially punish the resident but help. All ill intent dealt by the board should be handled but a professional third party. No financial gain should find its way to the board in any cases.
42976.6567	Duane King	N		PHI	I believe the TOST program is very beneficial to home buyers in that it eliminates unexpected significant repairs after taking possession of property.
42977.5790	Private	N		P	This system is an overreach of government and should be abandoned. Regardless of how smoothly the system functions or how courteous the employees are, it is not the role of government step into a real estate transaction and require this type of inspection.
42977.5872	Private	Y	C	P	I found the process difficult to work with and navigate.
42977.6005	John Smith	N		PR	I avoid Selling in Barry county because of the extra nuisance hassle. Kent county does things the best !!
42977.6023	Pat Doezema	Y		PR	I unlike many others have not had major issues with the requirements as a result of this program. I have not had major issues with inspectors etc. Smaller items have been addressed and not required but disclosed and there area probably some others that could be added but I do not have major issues.

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42977.6047	Dave Ash	Y		PR	Very necessary in the lake communities to monitor the wells and especially septic systems if sewer is not available (as it should be required for the lakes).
42977.6133	Private	Y	C	P	Total costs for many residents are hard to come by. I strongly feel that the whole health department has grown bureaucratically without warrant. The system feeds itself while the cost is put upon the residents. And they keep raising fees.
42977.6139	Private	N		P	Website could be easier to navigate to find reports- or Health department could take step to provide them to homeowner.
42977.6428	Private	Y	C	P	IF a property has no issues, I find the process, easy to use and easy to understand, however when there is an issue that is another story. Trying to get answers as to how to fix the problem, or more specifically how to compromise on a request for alternative correction - the communication and willingness to help get a problem property to close is near impossible.
42977.6538	Private	N		P	The process was simple yet I've not experienced a repair needed on any of my Barry Co well/septics so unable to answer those questions
42977.6542	Todd Roesler	N		PR	Selling real estate all over Michigan, Barry county's website is difficult to navigate, and enforcement to your process unlike Kent County and I will county, seems unreasonable in today's day and time. Kent County has the largest population, and by far more transactions second to Ottawa, and their user friendly relationships with contractors and the process makes it much easier. Barry county doesn't even have a website for the health department, and doesn't even direct you from a link to the Barry Eaton County health Department site. When you go to Barry County the building everybody's great when you go to Barry County online site and you charge and it's difficult to navigate and you've got old and new it's a conundrum. It's a hot mess.
42977.6801	Private	N		P	The cost of the inspection process is ridiculous -- seller has to pay the inspector, and the same amount paid to the county -- typically a total of \$425. County is ripping off its residents. Kent county charge for the same is \$250.
42977.8237	Private	Y	C	GP	The issues stated are the most softball and leading questions I have ever seen on a survey of this type. Why are we ranking TOST as a jobs bill. Why are we not making buyers not responsible for their own actions. Any one that would purchase a home would have to be exceptionally idiotic not to protect themselves by not having a comprehensive inspection performed themselves. I would appreciate a response to my request as to how these survey questions were formulated. My email address is bass.larry@yahoo.com. Finally, the primary issue pertaining to TOST is that it is a violation of personal property rights and that is not addressed in the survey. In the United States of America I should not be subjected to needing permission from a government agency to sell my property.

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42977.8280	Private	Y	C	P	One of the most frustrating parts of the TOST process is that Evaluators are hired that make recommendations and tell the sellers/buyers what to do and their thoughts/feelings/suggestions for action are often different than what the Health Department will later require or suggest for correction. The BEHD needs to do a much better job of training their evaluators as to what is acceptable OR the BEHD needs to do a better job of trusting the opinions of the evaluators that are being paid to do the job. If they aren't going to take their suggestions, the BEHD should do away with working with evaluators and just have their own paid staff handle the evaluations, taking the evaluators out of the mix all together. They seem to be a complete waste of time if the BEHD isn't working together with them to take their advice for solutions to problems.
42977.8658	Private	Y	C	P	Most of my inspections have gone well. One was hindered by some miscommunication within the department, but they did everything to get us closed. Thank you
42978.3983	Private	N		P	I feel that the process itself is a good idea to protect buyers and sellers, but I also think that it could be executed more efficiently. Being that I mostly deal in Kent County properties, the Barry County regulations were a bit complicated. Paperwork was not always clear as to what was needed, the timeline was constantly delayed, buyers/sellers became frustrated. The folks at the Health Department were a big help, but the process could certainly use some improvement. Thank you.
42978.5307	Private	N		P	Unnecessary bureacracy at its finest.
42978.6022	Private	Y	C	GP	I think it is VERY important to monitor the health and function onsite septic systems in order to protect our water resources.
42978.7234	Private	Y	C	GP	Great program that only improves the community. Protects home buyers.

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42979.5837	Charles Sebastian	N			I am MGWA(Michigan Ground Water Association) legislative chair and President elect, The pure fact of all the un-abandon wells found in this program is worth keeping it. Other issues discovered like isolation distances, high levels of Nitrates, Bacteria and just plain open wells are on top of that. I cant speak to the septic systems but I am sure there have been plenty of issues discovered there also. This is a good program, not perfect, but working toward bettering the whole environment for the taxpayers. The real estate developers/agents/brokers are interested in a quick and swift sale with a commission at the end! And the general public will want NO expenses what so ever added to there transaction, but remember it was \$\$ that got Flint in the situation to change water sources and look what happened there. Don't let money drive the decision on this program. Because it will be on your watch when something happens not if, when. The geology and hydro-geology of Michigan and Barry County is complex and we are learning more and more all the time. Please consider evaluating this on the true merits of the heath risks and environmental issues this helps improve alone and leave the money out of it. If anything your staff at Barry County Environmental Health needs more staff and help. I would be more than happy to meet with all of you or take any calls from you. Thanks for your consideration on this. Buddy Sebastian
42979.5887	Joyce Snow	Y	HAS	GP	I feel it was designed by the HD as an income generator. There was no baseline to start with and to my knowledge there has been no change in the quality of the water in the community. The HD should focus on the lakes in the County and assist residents in putting in sewage systems. Some lakes do have them, but several (Thornapple Lake for one) do not. There is more damage done from lake of good sewage systems in populated areas like those around lakes.
42981.9023	Bruce Telfer	N		PHI	The program has grown for the better since it began in 2008. There were growing pains as the program developed. The health department has made many changes to make the inspections easier on the public,the inspectors ,and the health department
42985.3813	Private	Y	C	GP	I believe that TOST began innocently enough as a way to protect our resources. I do not feel that the administration of the program has been in the best interests of Barry County Citizens. I believe that there has been enough publicity of the program that when citizens have issues with their septic and water systems they are afraid to call the health department for assistance even when their properties are not for sale.
42988.8175	Private	Y	C	GP	I feel that this infringes on my constitutional rights to buy and sell property in a timely manner. The power of the sale of property should not be given to the local health department.

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42989.5331	Ron Ohler	Y	NV	GP	<p>It is my opinion that TOST is an abuse of authority. While enforcement of codes that truly effect the environment may be warranted - codes can be excessive and actually in violation of an individuals right to not have to live to a particular economic or technological standard. In my business I supplied material and services to customers who were forced by the sale - or - purchase of property to make changes that they did not want or deem necessary. One party bought property with a 1 1/2 well. He was ordered to have it destroyed or face court action. I was in the process of working at another clients property at the time and asked the sanitarian who came out to inspect that work why the other client was ordered to plug the well. I was told that 1 1/4 inch was too small of a well. By who's standard? A 2" well commonly uses a 1 1/4" drop point. Well, we do not allow new 2" wells either. Why? She replied it is not enough water. This is totally not true. A person only needs a few gallons a day of water to eat, bathe and do laundry. A simple hand operated "pitcher" pump can easily provide this water for an entire family. I've travelled to countries where this is exactly how folks live. I had a customer near Wellman road who had just such a pump at her kitchen sink. It was her home's sole source of water. They had 3 people living there. In further discussion with the sanitarian I was told that all wells need to be 4" or larger in order to be deep enough to be ensuring clean water. Note - wells only need to be 25ft deep to meet the state of Michigan's health standard. Why should Barry County require more? I said deep wells require a pump in order to get water. Her response was - "well, everyone has electricity" This is not true. Are codes being written and enforced that are intended to create hardship for those folks in society who chose by personal choice or religion(like the Amish) to not have modern conveniences or electricity? Or running water? I have seen where folks were forced to "fix" a drain field before they could sell a property. This was because at some point the slope of the pipe exiting the septic tank came near the height of the tank outlet and reduced the flow rate out into the field. The system functioned and there was not noticeable issue to the owner during the some 7 years he owned the property. The 2" elevation change was not a significant issue as the tank baffles were high enough to accommodate the change in tank fluid level. I understand that in might be desirable to realtors, property owners or purchasers to have a network of professionals available who have knowledge of septic and water systems to perform inspections for those parties who want a property inspected prior to purchase. The hire of such trained professionals should be entirely a voluntary choice and their findings and possible recommendations should be simply advisory in nature.</p>
42989.7688	Dean Lancaster	Y	HAS	B	the tost inspection showed the drain field at 75% saturated, but passed it..

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42989.7909	Dean Lancaster	Y	HAS	S	the water well met all requirement's such as gallons per minute and water quality, but was failed because "it has the potential of being contaminated" it didn't have the pvc casing like todays wells.. however it was under a bilco door and out of the elements. the buyer agreed to for go a new well with a 5yr repair if frailer resulted. but was denied by health department.. the results was a new well with water that stinks and brown with tannins. far worse than original well. the hole experience with the health department then was miserable.. " they passed the drain field at the house I purchased with 75% saturation, seems inconsistent
42990.6493	Private	Y	C	P	i THINK TOST IS A GOOD CONCEPT.....MY PROBLEM IS THAT TOST HAS TAKEN AWAY FROM EXISTING SERVICES. IT SHOULD NOT TAKE 3-4 WEEKS TO GET A WELL PERMIT.... SHOULD BE 3-5 DAYS. A WELL PERMIT APPLICATION THAT IS NOT GOING THRU TOST SHOULD NOT BE A CHANCE FOR ENFORCEMENT ON SEPTIC ISSUES IF SANITARIAN IS ONLY THERE TO WRITE A WELL PERMIT.
42990.6699	Steve Barnum	Y	HAS	GP	I feel the expense of the permits are excessive and they cause the homeowner and buyer added expenses that are unnecessary. I don't feel the county should have that right.
42991.8482	Gene Hall	Y	HAS	B	We bought the bank owned property on a real estate web site, without a realtor involved so did not know about any TOST regulation. found about them through the codes person at Rutland Town-ship. Went to Health Dept in Hastings to find out what we needed to do and my wife received a tongue-lashing from the HD service person at the counter for not following their procedures. 1. If the county is to have these procedures, it should be aware of all contingencies that may affect the purchase of property, and allow for them, not reprimand the uninformed home owner/tax payer. 2. Invest in some customer service training with the health department personnel that are in contact with the public that they serve.
42997.5075	Todd Roesler	N		S	HORRIBLE LEVEL OF SERVICE FROM THEHEALTH DEPARTMENT. WHO ON THE PLAN-ET KNOWS WHAT TOST MEANS..ASK A 5 YEAR OLD AND A 60 YEAR OLD, YOU GET THE SAME ANSWER. TOAST IS SPELLED WRONG. ITS A SMAE IN THIS DAY & AGE, 2017 YOUR SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES ARE STILL IN THE 1900 CENTURY. IF COMMISSION-ER WORKED FULL TIME AND ADMINISTRATORS HAD A CLUE, YOU WOULD FIX THIS SYSTEM LOKE THE REST OF THE SUCCESSFUL COUNTY'S AROUND YOU. LOOK AT KENT CO, WHAT IS IN GROWING.....BARRY IS NOT GROWING AND ITS BECAUSE YOUR TOOLS, TEAMS AND LEADER SHIP NEED A FACE LIFT AND A FRONTAL LOBOTOMY.
42998.7970	Private	Y	C	GP	Not good,
42998.9266	Private	Y	C	B	Vote now to repeal TOST

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SummaryID	Name	Res-	City	Role	Please share your thoughts and/or experiences in the box below.
42999.3626	Private	Y	C	S	We took our house off the market because we couldn't afford to replace the system before the sale. Later, we were able to re-list after a family member died, leaving us an inheritance. How sad! Most don't have this opportunity and simply give their home up to the bank because they can't afford the \$10,000+ bill. That's exactly what my neighbor did. We were never even notified by the Health Dept. that our system failed. The realtor found it on-line! Our realtor, and not the Health Dept. was the most helpful person in this process. We advocated strongly on behalf of the home buyer to preserve the aesthetics of the property and to protect vehicle access to barns and property that would have been blocked by the Health Department's 1st plan for a new drain field and septic. It seems that the Health Department wants to shut down small farms as they removed all water access to the barns and attempted to block vehicle access. They did not offer an alternative for barn water, just cut the line without our permission! For a 1-bathroom house they required a double septic tank system! This process took 3 nightmarish months! We made mortgage payments on two properties during this time. We are fortunate that our buyer stuck by us and never withdrew his offer! It took the death of our father in order to satisfy the demands of the TOST program!
42999.4257	Private	Y	C	S	We had to have TOST done because we had a well. We had already paid a large amount of money to hook up to the new sewer system. It seemed like a lot to pay, just to have the well water OK'd. We had municipal sewer. This was in 2011.
42999.4816	Jeffrey Vannortwick	N	BCR	S	TOST is a reasonable expectation of the public for safety and public health. Personally I was a victim many years ago of not having TOST and it cost me a large sum of money when I didn't have it. TOST helps ensure a reasonable expectation that a property is habitable with out health risk and is completely habitable for a family. Knowing the history of a property and the working order of these necessary components is a good use of and a role of government. Efforts should be made to institute this as a state wide ordinance/law for the benefits are measurable.
42999.6236	Private	Y	C	S	The Health Dept. has too much power. It looks for ways to create often unnecessary expenses for citizens who are attempting to sell their property.
42999.9326	Private	Y	C	B	Our opportunity to buy the property could have been lost if my husband had not personally taken charge of the situation and been a squeaky wheel at the health dept. pushing them to get things done, and personally done all the leg work to make it happen. The health department told us it would take much longer than it did, they did not know how persistent my husband can be, most people would have been more patient and "polite" but he pushed them into doing it ahead of their slow schedule.

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43002.8989	Private	Y	C	GP	As a real estate investor I have avoided any properties not on city sewer for the very fact that dealing with tost is just too costly. I don't see where our clean water supply was in danger prior to tost. Would love too see the numbers on the negative financial impact this has had on this county since tost was in acted. Time for a major change. In my own neighborhood I witnessed a septic system that was only ten years old not pass tost. I think it is kind of like requiring any home sold in the county to comply with updated plumbing and electrical codes in the name of safety. No one would vote for that but yet we have tost in this county. Just because a system is not on par with today's code does not mean it is not functioning properly and safely.
43003.4020	Private	Y	C	GP	The amount of power that has been given to BCHD to condemn a house that is able to be lived in based on their opinion of a well and septic condition infringes on my unalienable constitutional right to the pursuit of happiness as well as the right to buy and sell property. The local health department tries to sell TOST on "clean water needs" but the truth is that with all the effort and money thrown at inspections, there is no measurable improvement to our water supply.
43003.4895	Private	Y	C	GP	If a septic system is working we should not have to replace it with the new above ground system forcing a seller to do this. The health dept. has too much power and too much force behind the decisions being made. Some sort of appeal process needs to be in effect because there is no oversight on the health department. It should not be up to the health department to condemn a residence. That is too much power for an institution. If it is no serious danger to the water supply, it should be on the buyer or seller to decide whether or not to update a system or follow through on a sale.
43004.9117	Cliff Ward	Y	BCR	GP	The Health Dept. should not have the power to seize money from citizens for something that should be settled between the buyer and seller. They should not have the power to levy outrageous fines that can go on into perpetuity or be able to threaten citizens with jail time. They have no right to deny citizens the right to buy or sell property. At the very minimum, TOST should be voluntary.
43005.5854	David Reed	Y	MV	GP	I am aware of several people that were effected by this program (TOST). I feel the program started out as a good idea, then was over done. It need to be fare, if the system is due for replacement (not working) then fine. If the system is working and up to code please let it be, there is no need to out undue cost on anyone. Everyone knows when a septic system is not working, then and only then should it have to be replaced. Our focus should be on the people that has a pipe running out on open ground, that is a hazard... Thanks for listening. Dave.
43005.6595	Private	Y	C	GP	To much government telling residents what to do, not considering the economical impact it puts on the family who is struggling to meet every day expenses. If it's not broke, leave things alone.
43007.5278	John Davis	Y	NV	B	The health inspector was rude and acted like it was a bother for him to do the inspection. He came back to replace the well only because he did not have a record where it was at. No sample was done he just mandated that the well needed to be replaced. He had us pump the septic tank only to find out the tank was empty. It was such a waste of money.