

Andrew J. Spano
County Executive

Department of Health

Joshua Lipsman, M.D., J.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

June 16, 2009

Mr. Ralph Tartaglione
RJT Motorist Services, Inc.
101 Westmoreland Avenue
White Plains, NY 10606

Re: Hen Island
Rye, New York

Dear Mr. Tartaglione:

This is in response to your June 1, 2009 e-mail to County Executive Andy Spano.

It is acknowledged that the use of cistern water for drinking purposes is unsafe. That is why the residents of Hen Island have been notified to post DO NOT DRINK signs above faucets conveying cistern water. Please be reminded that nothing in the Westchester County or New York State Sanitary Codes prohibits cisterns and there are no alternative water sources on Hen Island. Residents of the island we have spoken to have indicated awareness that this water is not potable and use bottled water for drinking. The additional safety issues you raise regarding cistern water use in food preparation, showering and when brushing teeth are cautions that residents certainly understand given the aforementioned warning notice.

You have also provided details regarding the sewage systems at nine of the cottages on Hen Island. Note that the construction of the presumed subsurface disposal systems predates Health Department jurisdiction. Based on your series of complaints, our inspectors will re-inspect the entire island including the cottages you have advised us about when they conduct unannounced weekend inspections this summer and will address any code violations promptly. Additionally, please do contact us immediately in the event of a sewage overflow on Hen Island so that we may respond promptly and investigate.

Your concern about the abandoned Cottage #18 will be passed on to the Kuder Island Corp. Board of Directors and the Rye Building Department to examine the potential safety issues you have brought to light.

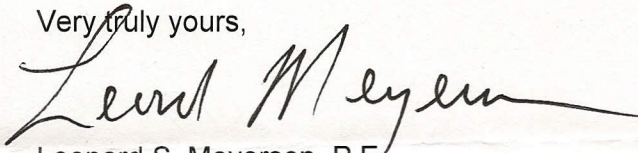
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Regarding the work you report done at Cottage #19 during 1993, note that Health Department approval is not required for reconnection to a pre-existing septic system. As stated above, inspectors will evaluate the septic system of this cottage during our summer inspections.

Regarding the work you report done at Cottage #27 in 2008, please note the following. Under the direction of the Rye Building Department, the owner submitted a letter to the Health Department copied to the Building Department stating that there would be no building expansion nor change to the subsurface disposal system. Based on the owner's statement, we issued a letter of no objection. Please note that it is the Building Department's prerogative to verify that the information provided is accurate.

Regarding cottages #1 and #11, plywood covers were observed on the purported sewage disposal pits during our April 24th inspection. We had no confirmation that the pits were part of sewage disposal systems but the Health Department did notify the Kuder Island Corp Board of Directors that if the pit does convey sewage then the cover must be replaced with one made of a permanent material. The Kuder Board did subsequently contact the Health Department and indicated that it would address this matter. Our inspectors will follow up at these cottages to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leonard S. Meyerson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Leonard S. Meyerson, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Environmental Health

cc: Andrew J. Spano, County Executive
Joshua Lipsman, MD, JD, MPH, Commissioner of Health