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INFORMATION FROM THE  
**CAPE COD COMMISSION**  
BARNSTABLE COUNTY



CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

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## **CCH2O: A simplified introduction to a complex problem**

New interactive tool provides the basics of nutrient management

Many Cape Cod residents and second-home owners do not understand the basics of the region's wastewater nutrient problem – why it exists, how it can be fixed, and how much it will cost. With the launch of CCH2O.org, the Cape Cod Commission added an important educational tool to introduce these concepts and more.

The goal behind CCH2O.org is to increase understanding of water quality basics through a web-based interactive tool. Having a target audience of adults with little to no prior technical knowledge, it was important to build a concise and simple site with engaging activities that encourage users to become more aware and to examine key relationships.

The core of CCH2O.org acquaints users with the watersheds in which they live, nutrient issues specific to that watershed and provides an opportunity for citizens to examine solutions to the wastewater problem at an individual and community-wide level.

"We wanted to translate the range and complexity of technologies available to reduce nitrogen reaching our embayments in a friendly, interactive way," Commission Executive Director Paul Niedzwiecki said. "This allows people to learn more about wastewater and the range of options to treat it on their own terms and pace."



Citizens will be led through a series of “activities” that will educate the user on the issue and their part in the problem, with the aim that a better understanding of these issues will increase their willingness to participate in the public process around this issue and pay for the solutions.

"This is like the elevator conversation about wastewater and nutrient pollution, but done online," said Phil "Jay" Detjens. He is a GIS analyst and database administrator for the Commission and serves as project manager CCH2O.org.

The Commission contracted with Mashpee-based 20Mile Interactive, a web design and development firm, to create the website and related activities.

Speaking for the project team at 20Mile Interactive, President Dave Fravel said, “As Cape residents, we appreciate the value of our natural resources and were honored to work with the Cape Cod Commission to create this educational site.”

CCH2O.org primarily serves as a portal to obtain information about the ongoing Section 208 Water Quality Plan update and other wastewater-related work relevant to the Commission and the county.

The Cape Cod Commission is tasked with developing a regional plan for wastewater on the Cape, and this web based tool is an essential part of the public process for creation of this plan.

Over the course of 22 meetings, the Commission met with 170 stakeholders in 11 watershed groups across the Cape to establish baseline information about watersheds and the technologies available to reduce nitrogen. A third round of meetings began Dec. 2 and runs through Dec. 11.

#### **ABOUT 20MILE INTERACTIVE:**

Formed five years ago, 20Mile Interactive is a full service web development and design firm. Clients include Puritan Cape Cod, Cotuit Center for the Arts and Cape Cod Young Professionals, among other commercial clients. Learn more at [20mile.in](http://20mile.in)

#### **ABOUT THE CAPE COD COMMISSION:**

Cape Cod Commission is the regional land use planning, economic development, and regulatory agency for Barnstable County, Massachusetts. It was created in 1990 to serve the citizens and 15 towns that comprise Cape Cod. The Commission works toward maintaining a healthy balance between economic progress and environmental vitality. "Keeping a special place special" describes the agency's mission to protect the region's unique qualities. The 19-member volunteer Cape Cod Commission board represents a wide spectrum of the community and provides oversight for a staff of 40 professionals. The Commission is responsible for regional planning, policy, and regulations to help manage growth, and the agency supports the Cape's 15 towns with cost-effective planning and technical services. For more information, visit: [www.capecodcommission.org](http://www.capecodcommission.org)