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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GTC Board of Commissioners Vote to Adopt County Septic Regulation

On Wednesday, May 21, in Regular Session, the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the Grand Traverse County Regulation for the Evaluation of On-site Water and Sewage Disposal Systems at the Time of Property Transfer. This new regulation, which becomes effective January 1, 2026, will require that any dwelling located within 300 feet of surface water and containing an on-site septic and/or water system undergo an evaluation of those systems before the transfer of that property.

This decision culminates a nearly nine-month process that entailed a collaboration between the health department, local elected officials, public and private partnership, and multiple committees resulting in the adoption of this regulation that encompasses all properties located within Grand Traverse County that meet these requirements.

The Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners previously held a Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 23, in which the public provided feedback and input on the language of the regulation. Many of those comments and suggestions were considered by the health department, and in some cases, incorporated into the regulation that was adopted by the board of commissioners.

The adoption of this regulation begins to take a proactive step toward protecting one of our community's greatest resources, our lakes and rivers. Under these new requirements, properties within this 300-foot zone must be evaluated by a certified evaluator. Certified evaluators are responsible for submitting evaluation reports to the Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD) for review and approval before any property transfer may occur.

"Septic and water system evaluations are essential to safeguarding public health and preserving the quality of our lakes, rivers, and groundwater for future generations," said Brent Wheat, Environmental Health Director for GTCHD. "We would like to thank our partner agencies, our staff, elected officials, and neighboring health departments for their dedication and collaborative efforts in supporting this important initiative."

The new regulation will be posted on our website, www.gtcountymi.gov/781/Environmental-Health, on Thursday.

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