

# Ongoing: Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority charges fee on technicality

**By Brian Cameron**  
*editor@northcoastcitizen.com*

In April, after an effort on behalf of the Hills of Neskowin Home Owner's Association (HON-HOA) to address a perceived disparity between the Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority (NRSA) and the HOA regarding what some feel is an unfair fee levied on their annual property taxes.

"All our community is asking is some degree of fairness and accountability," said Jim Blasius, Hills of Neskowin Home Owner's Association board President.

The fee in question is the basic operational tax the NRSA charges everyone within the special district's service area, in this case the tax is calculated at 59 cents per assessed \$1,000 on the value of the home, the average amount this calculates out to is approximately \$250-\$275 per household per year within the HON-HOA. But because of the nature of the home construction within the HOA and how each property was built with their own self contained septic systems, they don't feel the tax is fair as they are not directly benefiting from the NRSA's services.

The issue spans back a number of years when it was

first brought to the attention of one of the HOA's homeowners, they attended the NRSA meetings and endeavored to work with them in order to figure out a good solution to the problem.

"We eventually had to take the matter to the citizens by collecting signatures for the petition," John Metchum, HON-HOA Treasurer, said. "We got the correct amount but the Sanitary Authority decided to instead gather signatures for a ballot to be introduced to the voters."

The result of that ballot initiative held in the interests of the HON-HOA and the vote was certified on April 5 of this year. According to the laws dictating the time limits within special districts and how they enforce their tax gathering, the deadline for the following year was March 31, and though the Commissioner's certified the vote just five days after that deadline, it appears the NRSA is using that five-day time period as legal justification to initiate the tax regardless of what may seem fair or not to the residents of the Hills of Neskowin.

Recently the Hills of Neskowin residents found that the fee was still being taken out of their property taxes despite the voters approving the HON's ability to

withdrawal from the NRSA's service. This, according to Metchum is due to a technicality, and one that he and the others in the HON-HOA wish the Sanitary Authority would reconsider.

"As far as I know the only ones who can reverse the tax at this point is the sanitary authority," said Blasius, HOA board president. "I don't have a lot of faith that they will readily do that."

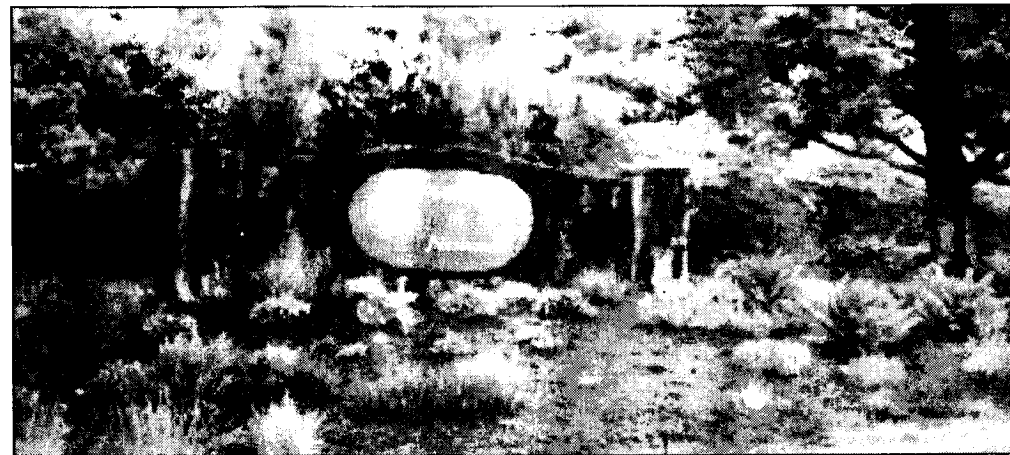
### Impact on others

Despite most of the issues revolving around the Hills of Neskowin Homeowner's Association other community members have been affected as well.

"This is not right what's happening here," said Roy Schneibel, Neskowin homeowner. "The community deserves to know that this is going on."

Schneibel is referring to what he sees as nefarious action taken by the NRSA in order to coerce him into paying the same tax that's being charged on other sanitary district customers, despite his home having an installed septic system.

"Why should I have to pay for a service I'm not benefitting from," said Schneibel. "I wasn't even aware that there was a sewer so this was all a surprise to me."



File photo

**While the Hills of Neskowin community voted to be removed from the sewer district taxing them on services they do not -- and cannot -- receive, Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority is still collecting.**

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The Headlight-Herald reached out to the Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority for comment regarding the issue, as of our deadline, however, they had not responded to our requests.

58th Annual  
**Old Fashioned Christmas Bazaar**  
 St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
*(The little white church with the steeple, up the hill.)*