

# **County Back to Scratch on Troubled Septic Tank Project near Inglis**

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After a year of frustrating failures, Levy County Commissioners are back to square one as they try to solve a perplexing septic tank drainage field problem at a home near Lake Rousseau in southern Levy County.

The home of Roberto and Deborah Tarafa at SE 197<sup>th</sup> Place has a poorly functioning septic tank drainage field that commissioners hoped to replace in the near future through a Community Development Block Grant.

But the bid amount announced at Tuesday's board meeting was more than double what engineers estimated. Engineers figured the project could be \$30,000.

Originally the board received no bids for the troubled project. They asked County Coordinator Freddie Moody to wait another week. He did. The only legal bid was submitted by Richardson Site Prep, Inc. for \$79,466.77.

Jordan & Associates, the county's planning consulting firm that has handled the project, agreed to rebid the work.

The proposed solution to the drain field problem is to remove 4 ½ feet of fill and replace it with sandy soil that will allow better drainage. The project involves dismantling the carport and tearing out the concrete pad and replacing all the dirt in the front yard.

The Tarafa home is located in Peaceful Acres on a peninsula of land that borders a manmade canal and is part of Lake Rousseau. One of the concerns is that the house stands on fill dirt used to create the subdivision and the soils are poorly drained.

A consultant for Jordan & Associates was asked after the meeting if he had ever thought about recommending a performance-based septic system for the Tarafa property. He had never heard about performance-based septic systems, but he said he would check it out on line.

Performance-based septic systems are sometimes used on waterways in Florida because the systems treat effluent to a higher degree of purity than a traditional septic tank system.

Commissioners have gone the extra mile attempting to find a solution to the septic tank drain field problem. The Tarafa family will have no working septic tank on their property if a solution is not found.

All proposed solutions to this point have centered on using a traditional septic tank system and improving the drain field.

The total project cost for the Tarafa home rehabilitation project would have risen to \$151,000 if commissioners had approved the septic drain field bid. Commissioners were told the \$79,466.77 bid wasn't firm. The company might have to raise the price if it ran into problems.

The project has been beset by problems from the beginning. The county commission doesn't want to abandon the family nor does it wish to get hit with a lawsuit if a solution can't be found and the family is left without a habitable home.

Commissioners are taking one more shot at getting a lower bid.

