

LETTERS *to the* EDITOR

Tips on homemade outside showers

THE PHOTOGRAPH that accompanied the Aug. 19 Life at Home article, "Clean getaway" by J.C. O'Connell, shows delighted people in their homemade outside shower. But did these people ever think of where the waste was going? One person says it gives their septic system a break. But the waste, and I emphasize waste, has to end up somewhere.

First, the installation of plumbing is governed by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 142. Any and all plumbing must be installed in strict conformance with Massachusetts state plumbing code by licensed plumbers. Homeowners cannot install their own plumbing.

The outside shower is a seemingly innocent apparatus meant to be used to rinse off in beach areas. However, as the article confirms, most are more commonly used as showers for bathing and are miles away from any beach. What started off as an innocent apparatus for rinsing off has become a plumbing fixture that dis-

charges human waste onto the ground, causing pollution and the potential for the spread of germs and disease.

In order to properly and legally install an outside shower, it must be connected to the sanitary drainage system, and installed by a licensed plumber, according to state code. All plumbing fixtures, drains, and appurtenances that are used to receive or discharge liquid waste or sewage should be properly connected to the drainage system of the building or premises in accordance with requirements of the state plumbing code.

So if you have the chance to visit your friend or neighbor who has one of these wonderful outside showers, but it is not properly connected to the drain, don't let the kids play in the yard (there are germs on the ground), and don't drink the water (it could possibly be contaminated).

JOSEPH P. GUZZO
PLUMBING INSPECTOR
Gloucester