## Septic System Installation Comic Book

Many homeowners throughout the Southwest border region attempt to install their own septic tank and soil treatment area with limited skills or expertise. Although numerous do-it-yourself teaching materials are available, many residents have limited English language skills. Others are even poorly literate in Spanish. As a result, even permitted systems are frequently installed with design deficiencies that present groundwater risks.

### Location:
University of New Mexico

### People involved:
- Craig Runyan and Dr. Adrian Hansen, New Mexico State University
- Dr. Bruce Lesikar, Texas A&M University
- Kitt Farrell-Poe, University of Arizona in Yuma

### Started/ Expected end date:
2003 – 2004

### Brief project description:
**Project approach:** The project adapted appropriate existing materials to develop detailed guidelines to owner-installed septic systems. The format was a conventional comic book style, with cartoon characters illustrating a step-by-step procedure for properly designing and installing the system. English and Spanish versions of the comic book were printed.

**Project activities to date:** The comic book was printed in both Spanish and English versions and 2500 copies of each were printed and distributed to New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona.

**Project funding:** The project was funded through a grant with the Southern Regional Water Quality Coordination program.

### Outcomes:
Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas have an easy to read, easy to understand guide to installing conventional septic systems.