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For Immediate Release:

Contact: Dave Kellam, Project Coordinator
Phone: 603-862-3403
Email: Dave.Kellam@unh.edu

Septic Scenes: A septic system variety show that helps you live with your septic system

The New Hampshire Estuaries Project (NHEP) is conducting a video contest to find the best original 2-5 minute videos that educate people about their septic systems. First prize for the best video is \$1000, with second earning \$500 and third place receiving \$200. The winning videos and several honorable mentions will be edited together in a 30-minute septic system "variety show" that will air on Community Access TV in the 42 communities of New Hampshire's coastal watershed. The contest begins on August 1 and will conclude on October 28, 2005. Go to www.nhep.unh.edu for contest details.

Anyone can submit a video, including environmental groups, videographers, youth groups, septic service companies, schools, or simply creative individuals with a video camera. Videos must convey an aspect of proper septic system maintenance. Videos can be shot in digital or VHS format and submitted on disk or tape. All submissions become the property of the New Hampshire Estuaries Project.

This video contest is part of a septic system education campaign conducted by the NHEP that strives to protect water quality by reducing the number of failing septic systems in NH's coastal watershed. Other campaign efforts include radio public service announcements, workshops for real estate agents, and septic system maintenance information sent to town clerks and homeowners.

Failing and overloaded septic systems are major sources of pollution in the state's lakes, streams, estuaries and groundwater. Pollutants, like bacteria and excess nutrients, can harm aquatic life, cause unsightly algae blooms, close shellfish beds, and pose a threat to human health. Most of the pollution problems can be avoided by pumping out a system every three years and being careful not to overload or damage a septic system.

The variety show concept is one that Project Coordinator, Dave Kellam believes will bring the septic system issue to the widest possible audience. "It seems everyone thinks of septic systems in a different way. Some people think about the environmental impacts while others worry about the cost of replacing a failed system. Most of us don't think about septic systems at all. By packaging a variety of viewpoints into one entertaining television program, we are likely to hit upon an issue that will motivate a homeowner to take care of his/her septic system".

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