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**For Immediate Release:**

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### **Septic System Awards Show Highlights Environmental Stewardship**

“And the award for the best septic system video goes to . . .” These are the unlikely words that will be heard throughout the Seacoast in March when the New Hampshire Estuaries Project’s (NHEP’s) Septic Scenes Awards Show begins airing on Community Access Television. The 30-minute video is the culmination of an educational campaign designed to teach residents in the coastal watershed that maintaining their septic systems protects their environment. The show features five creative, informative, and entertaining amateur videos that were submitted to a NHEP-sponsored contest held last year.

Contest organizer Dave Kellam notes that this unique video approach is designed to help people deal with an unpleasant subject. “Perhaps not surprisingly, people don’t talk much about their septic systems. But if a system fails, it is a big problem for homeowners, the public, and local water resources.” To draw attention to the importance of septic system maintenance, the public was invited to grab a video camera and create 3-5 minute videos that dealt with the subject in a creative way. Kellam notes that the videos exceeded his expectations. “Every video we received captured the spirit of the project perfectly, which was to utilize the creative power of citizens to address local environmental issues. When we put all of the videos together, we got a great show featuring diverse perspectives on an important community issue.”

The winning video submitted by John Shore of Portsmouth and Dina Sutin of Manchester was entitled “Your Septic System, Your Friend”. It included an original septic system music video, an animated SCUBA diver touring a septic system tank, and a news report parody exposing a septic system abuser. Tim Gaudreau of Portsmouth won second for his animated “Fish Gone Bad” video that followed the strange evolution of a fish living in a pond contaminated by an improperly functioning septic system. And Terry Picard of Dover won third place with “Your Septic System” which explored how a septic system is like the human body’s digestive tract. Clips from two other honorable mentions are included in the 30-minute show.

All of the videos referenced some part of the NH Department of Environmental Services’ recommendations to inspect septic systems yearly, pump them out every three years, and keep harmful products out of septic systems. For a complete list of recommendations, call the DES Subsurface Systems Bureau, (603) 271-3501