

## Protecting Our Water - 19 Homeowners Win In Suffolk County Septic Lottery

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### **Bellone, Legislators Draw Winners of Free Wastewater Treatment System**

#### ***19 Homeowners to Join Pilot Program to Reduce Nitrogen Levels***

(Hauppauge, NY, Dec. 15, 2014)— Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone and members of the Suffolk County Legislature selected 19 homeowners to receive a free advanced wastewater treatment system as part of groundbreaking pilot-program to greatly reduce nitrogen contamination in the county's water supply. The homeowners were chosen by lottery on Monday, December 15 at a General Meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature.

Suffolk County received over 130 applications from residents to participate in the Septic Lottery. The applicants were reviewed and vetted to ensure they met the required criteria for installation of the advanced wastewater treatment systems.

"This initiative represents a significant step in improving the quality of water, an important resource for economy and health," County Executive Bellone said. "This pilot program will demonstrate the benefits of protecting one of our great natural resources and will provide individual homeowners as well as the rest of Suffolk County an opportunity to improve both the environment of their homes as well as that of Suffolk County."

Fifteen Legislators drew the names of winners from their district; three Legislators who did not have applicants from their district drew three other names and Suffolk County Executive Bellone drew one. More than 130 homeowners applied for the program.

In the 12th LD Legislator John Kennedy drew the names of Donna and James Minet of Nesconset and John and Carissa Wellenreuther, also of Nesconset.



Leg. Trotta drawing the name of Septic Lottery winner. In the 13th LD Legislator Robert Trotta drew the names of James Soria of East Northport and Katie and Brian Dorsey of Fort Salonga. "I am glad that several of the 19 lucky winners for a free advanced wastewater treatment system is in my district. I congratulate all of the homeowners and would like to personally thank BUSSE Green Technologies, Norweco, Orenco Systems and Hydro-Action Industries for donating all of the systems for use in this pilot program and for covering the cost of installation and maintenance fees for the next five years. I hope the County's next step

will be to put sewers in downtown Kings Park and Smithtown,” said Suffolk County Legislator Robert Trotta (R- Fort Salonga).

The pilot program is part of Suffolk County’s Reclaim Our Water initiative, a comprehensive plan to improve the County’s water quality, restore the region’s natural storm barriers by eradicating nitrogen pollution by means of sewerage targeted areas and implementing advanced on-site wastewater treatment systems. County Executive Bellone has made protection and improvement of the water supply his top priority.

The program will test systems in different types of terrain so that they can be permitted for general use within the county. Many of these advanced wastewater treatment systems were observed by county experts on a tour of septic programs conducted in other states in the Northeast.

“Suffolk County has more than 360,000 unsewered homes, creating excess and unhealthy amounts of nitrogen in the ground due to failing, unmaintained and excessive loadings from septic systems and cesspools,” said County Executive Steve Bellone. “Advanced wastewater treatment systems for homeowners are a vital part of the solution to our water quality crisis. While this is not the single solution, this is one of the initiatives we are doing to reclaim our water here in Suffolk County.

The septic systems are expected to be installed by April 2015. Homeowners will receive free installation, monitoring and maintenance for five years.

The 19 systems were donated by four national manufacturers, BUSSE Green Technologies, Norweco, Orenco Systems and Hydro-Action Industries, all of whom have extensive experience across the country, as well as Europe, in removing excess nitrogen from residential and commercial properties. The advanced wastewater treatment systems are valued at up to \$15,000 per system.

The firms will also work with Suffolk County officials and the County’s Department of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs throughout the process to develop an extensive job training program to bring more septic and wastewater-oriented employment opportunities to Suffolk County. The program will additionally help to create a homeowner awareness program to provide residents information on proper septic system maintenance protocols in an effort to reduce nitrogen levels.

Several organizations, including the Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Peconic Green Growth, Nature Conservancy, the Peconic Estuary Program and the Suffolk County Planning Commission assisted in the outreach to homeowners.

For more information on Suffolk County’s septic demonstration program, as well as the detailed report on its septic tour, log onto [www.suffolkcountyny.gov](http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov).

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