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Installation of new advanced wastewater treatment system begins at home of Mattituck lottery winner

by [Lisa Finn](#) Oct 27, 2015, 1:35 pm

With advanced wastewater treatment alternatives a hot topic in Southhold, one Mattituck man who won the Suffolk County lottery for a free system saw installation begin at his home today.

Thomas Pileski was onhand at his Elijah's Lane home this morning as Dave Warren of Clear River Environmental and others began the process of installing a new Norweco System as part of the county's pilot program.

Pileski of was one of 19 homeowners picked by Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone and members of the Suffolk County Legislature to win a free wastewater treatment system, as part of a new and groundbreaking pilot program embraced with an eye toward reducing nitrogen in area water supplies.

"It's great to win," Pileski said last December. "These may become mandatory in the future." And the savings, he said, are sweet: "I'm going to save \$15,000" in having the system installed. Pileski's monthly costs for electric will average around \$5, he said.

The Norweco hydro-kinetic system, according to a description on the Norweco website, is a “revolutionary wastewater treatment system that employs innovative hydro-kinetic filtration technology to produce the cleanest, most consistent effluent quality available. Developed to serve homes and small business outside of city sewers, the hydro-kinetic system uses the extended aeration and attached growth processes to treat wastewater, and features innovative nitrification-denitrification technology.”

The system is about the same size as a traditional system, takes one day to install, removes nitrogen from the effluent and sends only clean water back to the cesspool, according to Warren.

Linda Goldsmith, who is running for assessor in the election, was on hand, as was Albie de Kerillis, running for town board; Goldsmith said she'd like to see the Oysterponds Union Free School District embrace a new, advanced cluster system for wastewater treatment.

The system is critical, Pileski said, to protecting the environment. “Anything we can do to help preserve what we have for generations to come is good,” he said. “I’ve always been on the water. I did this for my kids, and even if my kids don’t stay in the area, I did this for the next generation.”

Pileski has three children, ages 24, 22 and his son, 20, Benjamin Pileski, who was badly injured after being struck by a taxi in Montauk in July, and has now made incredible strides in his recovery and is almost back to work in the Navy.

Ben’s remarkable progress is a “miracle” that Pileski said has made him a firm believer in the power of prayer and a loving, supportive community.

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, according to Bellone.

“This initiative represents a significant step in improving the quality of water, an important resource for economy and health,” 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.”

Suffolk County Legislator Al Krupski drew Pileski’s name in the lottery last year.

“Suffolk County is entering the modern era of wastewater treatment. I want to applaud the county executive, Suffolk County planning and the Department of Health Services for shepherding this initiative through,” Krupski said.

The pilot program is part of Suffolk County's Reclaim Our Water initiative, a comprehensive plan to improve the county's water quality, and restore the region's natural storm barriers by eradicating nitrogen pollution by sewerage targeted areas and implementing advanced on-site wastewater treatment systems.



The program will test systems in different types of terrain; many of the 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,” Bellone said. “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.

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. 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 a job training program to bring more septic and wastewater-oriented employment opportunities to Suffolk County. A homeowner awareness program will also kick off 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.

The new system, Pileski said, is “good for the future of our bays.” With November 2 marking the start of scallop season, he said the health of area waterways is critical. “This is for my children, and my children's children,” he said. “We need to do this for their future.”