

Pay to play: tax money for fixing septic systems

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Town earmarks \$100,000 for repairs

Do generous local grants to encourage septic system upgrades work? You bet they do, if one small program in New York is any indication. In Southampton on New York's Long Island, the town board put up \$50,000 a few months ago to cover 50 to 60 percent of the cost of replacing failed septic systems. Residents burned through that grant money in two weeks. A news account this week reported the town is doubling down on its program, and spending another \$100,000 for new septic systems.

According to Southampton councilwoman Christine Scalera, the incentives are making people "eager" to fix their ailing systems. You can read the story here:

Southampton report

How do you feel about local governments offering subsidies to promote new septic systems? If the ultimate goal is to improve environmental quality, should more communities jump on this kind of program? Have you talked to your local officials about the importance of identifying failing systems and looking for ways to get new ones in the ground?

Programs like these – little by little– are helping clean up pollution hotspots. But they also help the onsite industry, providing more work for contractors and a means to showcase the advances of the decentralized wastewater industry.