

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dr. Joe Costa

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Septic System Test Center soon to be constructed

Wareham -- The Buzzards Bay NEP and Barnstable County jointly announced that the firm Engineered Construction of Hyannis was awarded a \$297,000 contract to construct a facility at the Massachusetts Military Reservation to test and promote innovative types of septic systems.

The facility, titled the "Alternative Septic System Test Center for Massachusetts" has been more than two years in the making, and is the result of a collaboration of the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program, Barnstable County Department of Health and the Environment, UMass Dartmouth Center for Marine Science and Technology, and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

According to Buzzards Bay NEP Executive Director Dr. Joe Costa, the Project, a planning unit of Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, received a \$459,000 grant two years ago to design and build the test center, and to test and promote the use of innovative wastewater disposal systems in Massachusetts. In 1996, a technical team identified the site at the Mass Military Reservation adjoining the base's new wastewater treatment plant as the best candidate for the facility. In 1997, the Buzzards Bay NEP awarded funds to the Barnstable County Health and Environmental Department to hire contractors to design and build the facility. Last year, [Phelps Engineering, Inc.](#) of Middlebury, Vermont and Omni Environmental Inc. of Amherst, MA were hired to design the facility. After a solicitation this spring, Barnstable County signed a contract with the Hyannis construction firm.

George Heufelder, Project Manager for the County Department of Health and the Environment has been overseeing the project jointly with Dr. Tony Millham of the Buzzards Bay NEP. According to Heufelder, "this facility will be a great asset to the County and State alike. We are really looking forward to getting this project in the ground and running." Heufelder indicated that construction will begin in early June and that state and federal agencies will soon announce a groundbreaking ceremony at the site.

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