

PRESS RELEASE

Ecology Action Centre feels private sewage treatment a dangerous precedent for Antigonish Harbour October 18, 2007

“There are a number of compelling reasons to refuse this permit. This is an opportunity to develop an integrated coastal watershed management plan”

The Ecology Action Centre (EAC) is concerned about a proposed private sewage treatment plant in Antigonish Harbour. Jennifer Graham, Coastal Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre says “This type of sewage treatment systems removes only fecal coliform bacteria. It will not limit nutrient and sediment loading to coastal waters. This will have a negative impact on the health of the entire ecosystem, especially the nearby oyster fishery. Furthermore, a system failure could lead to large volumes of raw sewage being pumped into the Harbour”.

The EAC also feels that allowing one private sewage treatment plant sets a dangerous precedent until there is an assessment of the current health and carrying capacity of Antigonish Harbour and the potential cumulative impacts of this project. Allowing private sewage plants to spring up in an ad hoc manner jeopardizes previous government commitments, most recently Environment Minister’s Mark Parents comments in the September 14th Chronicle Herald about moving forward on an integrated coastal strategy. .

The Ecology Action Centre feels the Minister should refuse the application for the proposed sewage treatment plant and any other similar onsite-sewage treatment facilities in Antigonish Harbour pending further review of the impacts this system. Instead, they recommend the Department of Environment help set up a pilot integrated coastal watershed project in the area.”

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