

# Suffolk County's Clean Water Plan

Assuring our well-being by safeguarding our most precious asset – the surrounding waters that sustain us

### Sewers Needed Now, Suffolk Warned

By Earl Lane

Cakdain Mention Long Island to some people in Bangalore, India, or Tashkent, USSR, and they might wrinkle their noses and ask, "Isn't that where they have cesspools?"

That proves something, Dwight F. Metzler, the state's deputy health commissioner for environmental services, said yesterday to make a point about several

Recounting his travels through India, Russia and other countries and his discussions with health officials, Metzler said, "Long Island is the outstanding example in the world where a major population still discharges sawage in ground waters. Even people in underdeveloped countries tell me they can't under-

Motzler spoke at a conference at Dowling College on water pollution. He called for passage of a proposed power district for southwestern Sulfolk County on the November ballot. After the session, he outlined steps that state agencies could take to prevent further pollution of the county's water supply by seepage from esspecia. About half of Nasam County is served by severa. In Suffolk only several isolated communities and developments have several.

Metzler said that the State Water Resources Commission, which issues permits for the use of fresh water supplies, could reduce or halt permits for use of the county's remaining water resources if the contamination continues. He also said that the drilling of new wells could be halted and existing wells could be quarantined in areas where underground water supplies are being contaminated.

Metzler said, "I doubt that the state will move in within the next five years" to press for construction of the sowers if the sewer proposal is defeated. But he said that the State Health Department would contime a close scrutiny of county water usage and contamination levels. He said that Suff officials have been asked to meet next week with the Water Resources Commission in Albany to discuss the county's water supply. It will be the first such ffolk in about two years, he said.

Metzler said that the State Pure Water Authority,

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which can construct and operate general if requested charges on the 40-year bonds would bring the total-to by a local government, has no authority to order cost to \$521,373,750. About \$60,000,000 of the remainto by a local government, has no authority to order searce construction. A department of health spokesman said that if health conditions in an area become hazardous because of inadequate sowage facilities, the commissioner of health can intervene under broad provisions of the public health law and require a local timetable on projects to remedy the situation.

"Sewers must come; you need them now. The longer you put it off, the more expensive it will be." Metzler said. He said that about \$100,000,000 is left from a \$1 billion state bond issue approved in 1966. for sewer facilities. The proposed Southwest Sewer District would cost \$269,060,000 to build, Interest

ing state funds can be applied to the Suffolk project.
Metzler said that those funds will likely be fully obligated by next summer" whether Sulfolk acts or not. Metzler also said that inflation of construction costs of sewage facilities totals about 12 per cent a

John M. Flynn, a public health engineer in the county health department, agreed with Motzler that only about 20 per cent of Suffelk's water supply is being extracted from water tables less than 75 feet below the surface. The figure was about 80 per cent in

### Ban on Cesspools In Suffolk Sought

By William Nack

Brooklyn-A Suffett conservation group, claiming that cesspools pollute the county's ground waters, is seeking a preliminary infunction in U.S. District Court here today restraining the county health department from allowing cosspools to be put in ground waters.

The arguments for the injunction are part of a broader suit which, if successful, would cartail almost all commercial, retidential and industrial development in the county. The suit, prepared by attorney Victor J. Yannacone Jr. for the Santal Defenders of the Environment, is an attempt to block the county, 10 towns and 29 incorporated villages from "the further development of their natural resources . . , until ecologically sophisticated, environmentally responsible criteria for such development have been established." Yannacone said that citizens are being deprived of a "livable environment" without due process of law.

Yannacone said that he would seek a preliminary injunction before U.S. District Judge Joseph Zavatt "to restrain the Suffice County Department of Health from issuing any more permits for compool construction in any location where those compools are set in ground waters." That would prohibit the installation of cestpools, which serve about 98 per cent of the Suffice population, "almost anywhere south of the terminal morane south of Jericho (Tumpiles) on the grounds that continued cosspool disposal of wage waste would cause serious, permanent and irreparable damage to the (county) water supply," he said.

### U.S. Warns Suffolk It May Act on Sewers

By Alan Eysen

Patchegue—The federal government may take an active role in bringing to Suffolk County unless the county speeds its "data to halt pollution of the bar waters between Blue Point and Westhampton Beach, a federal official said yesterday.

Murray Stein, assistant commissiones for en-forcement for the U.S. Water Pollution Control forcement for the U.S. Water Pollution Control forcement for the U.S. Water Pollution conference bere that the federal government would join with the state in seeking development of a regional sewage collection and treatment system in the court of fairling like in the perion. The law you country fairling like in the perion. The law you would not be used to be used to be used to a long time. Stein said.

The federal official decirated to go into decial on what the government could do to bring about the development of a fixed resistance to the several say.

development of a serious system or to suggest any deadline for local action. He said, however, "We can order the county to stop polluting the water." Stein added that if the county refused to comply with such an order, the government could bring a civil action that and scatt in fines being level against [Suffel]. A proposed poor system for the West End was defeated in a February, 1967, refer-

West End was detected in a Petersary, 1907, recreding by a 61 wargin.

The County Board of Supervisors is in the process of naming a new 10-members—agreey to consist of five voting members, chosen for their knowledge of the properties, and fire non-voting members, including the county executive and the chairman of the board of supervisors.

Stein remarked on the need for a region

But by duck famis and by the Village of Pat-

chague's madequate sewage treatment system.

The commissioner said. "You need an arounde collection and treatment system if you want to office Moriches Bay to the fullest extrat." Deputy utilize Moriches Bay to the fullest extrast." Departs Teath Commissioner Dwight F. Methets, who also attended the conference, said that his agency would also press for serion on such a system. Bolts and Methedre and, however, that they would more cautiously in the hope that the ministrace in developing the system. They said that their current efforts would be exceed to following thought on the economic dations made at two earlier conferences called by the defeat all exercitors and only the inferior of the said of the serior to the said of t

federal government on pollution in the 15-mile stretch of how between Blue Point and Westhampton Beach. Yesterday's conference was, in effect, a progress report on these recommenda said that it would be at least six months before the next conference will be held.

The recommendations were that the Village of Patchogue construct a secondary sewage tootment plant to be in operation by 1970; that dock farmers in the area have pollution treatment facilities inthe Monches Bay front and recommend diedging and waste disposal measures.

County Board Chairman John V. N. Klein said

County Board Charmes John V. N. hera uses flash evould not care to see the federal government force a superior on the county. "I would seek to see the instaltive count from the people of the county," he said County Executive Dennica used. "We have to do something on the boost level, and quickly. I have said often coongb that if Situal translation on the needs not a risingle particular size as seed. Two have to do something on the host made toward relieving pollution created in the custom particular pollution created in the custom particular of Creat South Bay and Morriches concluding with the problems contemporation of Creat South Bay and Morriches and Created South Bay and Morriches concluding the problems contemporation of Creat South Bay and Morriches concluding the problems contemporate the problems c

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#### **Big East End Sewer Plan Unveiled**

Newsday (1940-1987); Jul 19, 1973; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Newsday

pg. 21

### Big East End Sewer Plan Unveiled

By Larry Eichel

Hauppauge-Sewer systems should be built in nine eastern Suffolk hamlets and existing sewers should be improved in two others at a cost of well over \$173.-000,000, a county study has recommended.

The 11 projects are the first stage of a proposal outlining the eventual construction of sewers throughout the entire East End over the next 50 years, if future population increases make that necessary. But, yesterday, several East End officials said they had their doubts about the first stage, which is concerned with the immediate future.

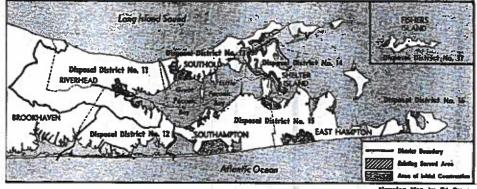
Bowe Walsh Associates of Melville, which prepared the plan, did not attempt to predict what the initial 11 projects would cost by the time they are built. The report did say, that if all the systems had been built in 1970, they would have cost about \$173,000,000, based on the 1970 dollar. The entire proposal was estimated at \$700,000,000 in 1970 dollars.

But several East End officials said they did not even believe that much, noting that the estimated cost of the existing Southwest Sever District in Islip and Babylon had increased from \$269,000,000 (the esimate prepared by Bowe Walsh) to the current \$588,500,000 in just four years.

The report, released today, notes that sewer construction costs have increased as much as 10 o 15 per cent a year recently. And, as in most other construction estimates, the costs do not include financing charges.

Even without figuring in inflation, the projects could lead to increases in local property tax rates of as much as \$1.53 for each \$100 of assessed valuation. And that estimate assumes that the county, which would operate the sewer districts, could get maximum state and federal sid-90 per cent of the cost of the sewage treatment plants and main pipes.

The \$75,000 report, which took almost four years to be written and approved by county and state agen-plan. "I think their cost estimates are very, very



cies, said the need for the 11 projects was "immediate." Sewers are needed now, the engineers said, to prevent the groundwater from becoming a health hazard and to assure that off-shore waters are fit for shellfishing, swimming and other uses. Realistically, they said, the projects should be well underway by 1980 and completed by 1990. The projects would provide the basis for the eventual expansion of sewers throughout the five eastern towns, should that become DOCESSATY.

County Executive Klein said that the target dates were reasonable, but that he anticipated no concrete steps toward implementating the report for at least a year. One step that will be taken is a public hearing on the report in Riverhead Sept. 25.

Several East End officials indicated yesterday that they were not in complete agreement with the

low," Clayton Moore, mayor of West Hampton Beach said. "I don't think it [the lower system] will ever come. And if it does it's a long way away." Southampton Town Supervisor Theodore Hulse agreed: "If it's going to be as complicated and expensive as the West End, I don't want to have anything to do with it."

The need to extend the sewer system beyond the 11 hamlets is tentative, according to both Suffolk environmental control commissioner John Flynn and Louis DiMatteo, who co-authored the report for Bowe Walsh. The report assumes that in the next 50 years all the land in the East End will be developed according to the use for which it is now zoned. From that assumption, Bowe Walsh projected a combined summer and permanent population of more than 1,000,000 by the year 2020, "That may be out of date already," Flynn said this week, referring to recent upzoning plans in several eastern towns and the county's plan to prevent development of at least 9,000 acres of farmland by buying it.

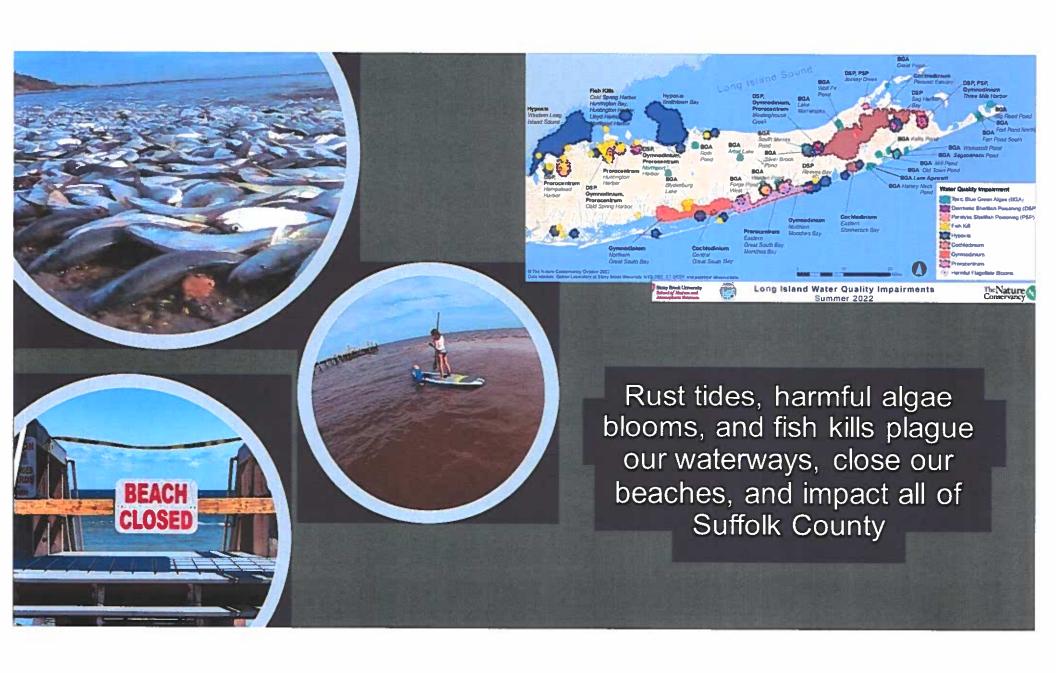
### **More Than Fifty Years Later**



- There are still more than 380,000 cesspools septic systems in Suffolk County
- More than 250,000 are cesspools, nearly 210,000 are in environmental priority areas
- All three major estuaries are listed as "impaired" by EPA and DEC
- Harmful algal blooms have become increasingly more frequent
- Studies show that 70% of nitrogen comes from cesspools and septic systems

## HOW NITROGEN FROM OUR CESSPOOLS REACHES OUR BAYS AND HARBORS





### THIS PROBLEM IS NOT UNIQUE TO SUFFOLK

LOCAL

### Florida septic tanks in crisis

More than 2.7 million septic tanks lay buried in Florida. Many pollute our waterways. Cleaning them up will cost billions.

Dinah Voyles Pulver dpulver@gatehousemedia.com Published 7:37 p.m. ET June 1, 2019 | Updated 7:37 p.m. ET June 1, 2019

Gainesville, FL

#### Here's why thousands of Cape Cod homeowners might need to replace their septic systems

State regulatory changes would require some homeowners to upgrade their septic systems to address water pollution.



Cape Cod, MA

### A Dirty Cesspool Secret And A Cautionary Tale For Hawaii

We are still behind when it comes to converting cesspools, but we have a rare opportunity to become a national leader in new sanitation technologies and policies.

By Stuart Coleman

September 4, 2022 - 8 min read

What did we learn from our partners in Suffolk County? Beyond the environmental and human health impacts, the main lessons revolve around the need for more innovative technology, financial resources and new policies and regulations to help implement the necessary changes.

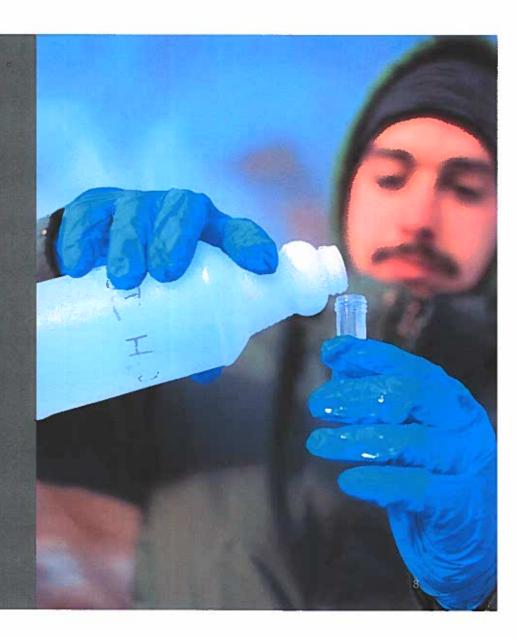
Hawaiian Islands

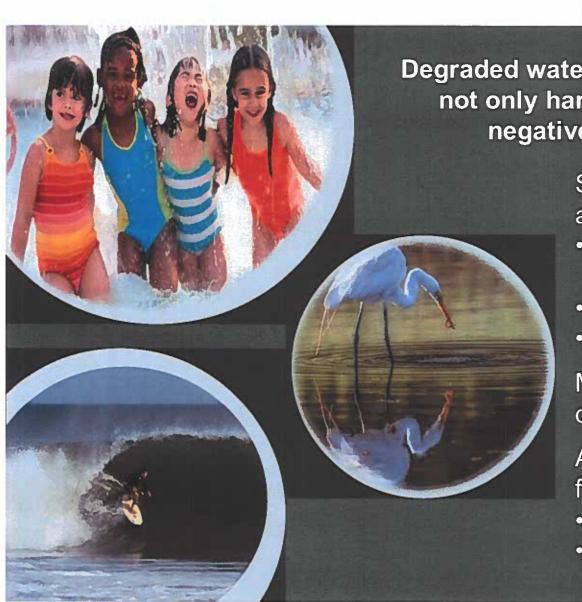
### THE CONSEQUENCES

Nitrogen pollution is compromising groundwater quality and polluting our bays and harbors

Scientific studies show that cesspools and septic systems are the primary source, and data suggests possible linkages to cancer.

Degradation of wetlands is making coastal communities more vulnerable to storm surge





Degraded water quality in our bays and harbors not only harms our environment, but also negatively impacts the economy.

Suffolk County's surface waters annually support:

- \$750 million in beach-related activity
- \$500 million in boating expenditures
- \$41 million in commercial fishing

Marine-related enterprises support over 35,000 jobs

All tourism-related economic activity featuring surface waters account for:

- A total of \$3.2 billion
- 7% of the workforce

# THE SUFFOLK COUNTY CLEAN WATER PLAN IS THE SOLUTION

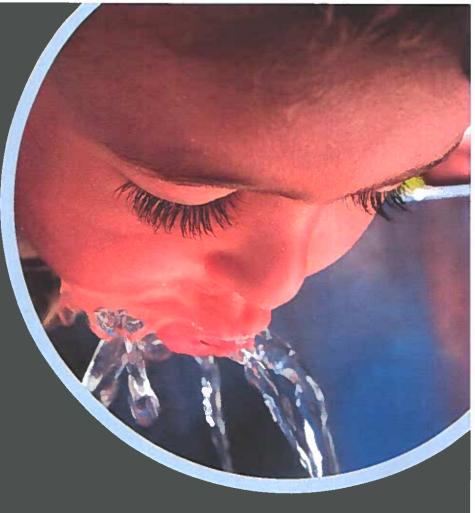
Restore water quality in our bays and harbors, and better protect groundwater

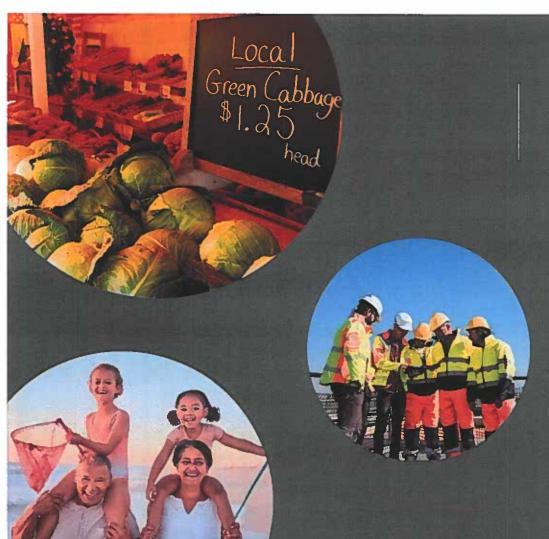
Strictly follow recommendations of science-based Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan

Eliminate 172,000 cesspools and septic systems by 2034 by installing Clean Water septic systems or connecting parcels to sewers

Create a dedicated fund to make system upgrades or sewer connections affordable for homeowners

Provide the "local match" needed to secure federal and state funding to make system upgrades affordable for property owners





# BENEFITS FOR ALL SUFFOLK COMMUNITIES

Upgraded wastewater infrastructure will:

- Restore water quality in bays and harbors
- Protect groundwater/drinking water
- · Better protect public health
- Safeguard our quality of life
- Create thousands of jobs
- Increase property values

### THE CLEAN WATER PLAN

"The strength of this plan is the incredibly strong and sound science on which it is based...While I have spent my career documenting the degradation of Long Island's fisheries and aquatic habitats, it is inspiring to finally see a plan designed and implemented that will reverse course on decades of negative trajectories. The citizens of Suffolk County will reap the benefits of this plan for decades to come."

-Christopher J. Gobler, Ph.D., Endowed Chair of Coastal Ecology and Conservation School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences and Director, New York State Center for Clean Water Technology at Stony Brook University.



### **CLEAN WATER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

To make the Clean Water Plan work, two things must be in place:

- 1. The organizational structure required to manage installation and maintenance of thousands of Clean Water Septics
- 2. A recurring source of funding to serve as the "local match" needed to secure federal and state funding

The key to advancing the Clean Water Plan is to make it easy and affordable for property owners



# THE SUFFOLK COUNTY CLEAN WATER PLAN

Voters should decide whether to establish a Clean Water Infrastructure Fund for sewers and Clean Water Septics using 1/8 of a penny in sales tax

Benefits of this approach include:

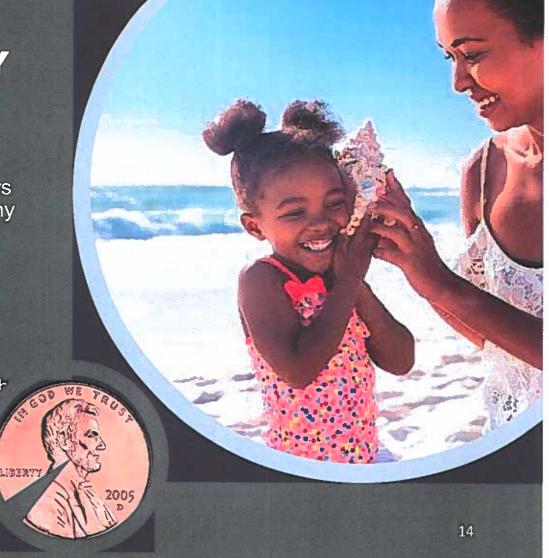
Absolutely no increase in property taxes

· No new fees

 Visitors (not just residents) contribute much of the revenue to the fund

1/8 cent nearly invisible to consumers

• Impact is 12 cents on a \$100 purchase



### THE SUFFOLK COUNTY CLEAN WATER PLAN

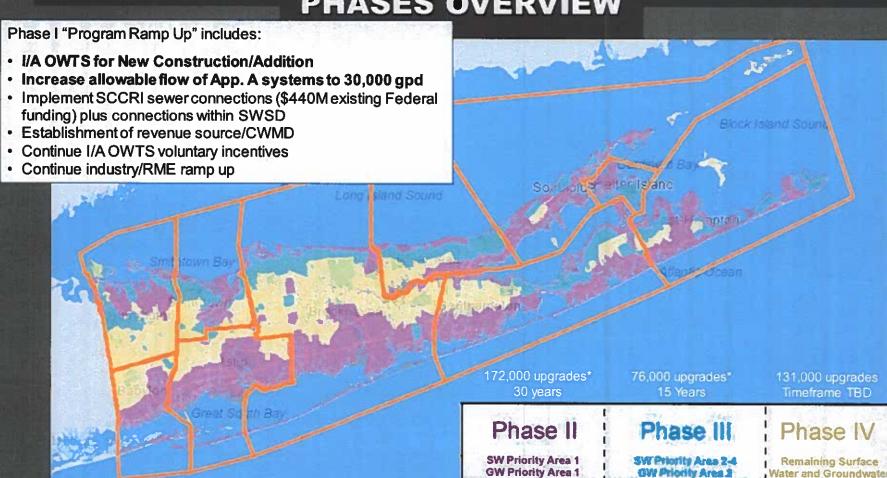
	Clean Water Plan				
2024	\$57,758,612				
2030	\$65,045,578				
2040	\$79,290,197				
2050	\$96,654,307				
2060	\$117,821,061				
TOTAL	\$3.1 Billion				

- Would create a dedicated water quality fund to make sewer connections and clean water septics affordable for homeowners
- Utilizes an additional 1/8th of a penny of sales tax, resulting in over \$3 billion in funding over the life of the program

### A SCIENCE BASED PLAN FAIR TO ALL

- By law, all funds must be spent on wastewater upgrades consistent with Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan
- Plan places top priority on near shore areas
- Law requires that 75 percent of funding be used for Clean Water Septic systems, and 25 percent for sewers
- Board of Trustees to oversee use of Fund includes robust local representation
- No new sewer projects being proposed by Suffolk County in any East End Town – only Clean Water Septics
- Town and Village sewer projects are eligible for funding

### SUBWATERSHEDS WASTEWATER PLAN PROJECT **PHASES OVERVIEW**



0-2 Year Contributing Area 2-25/50 Year Contributing Area

Water and Groundwater

**Protection Parcels** 

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO OVERSEE FUND**

Includes representatives from:

- East End Mayors and Supervisors Association
- Peconic Estuary Partnership
- Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission
- South Shore Estuary Reserve
- Suffolk County Village Officials Association
- Suffolk County Supervisors Association

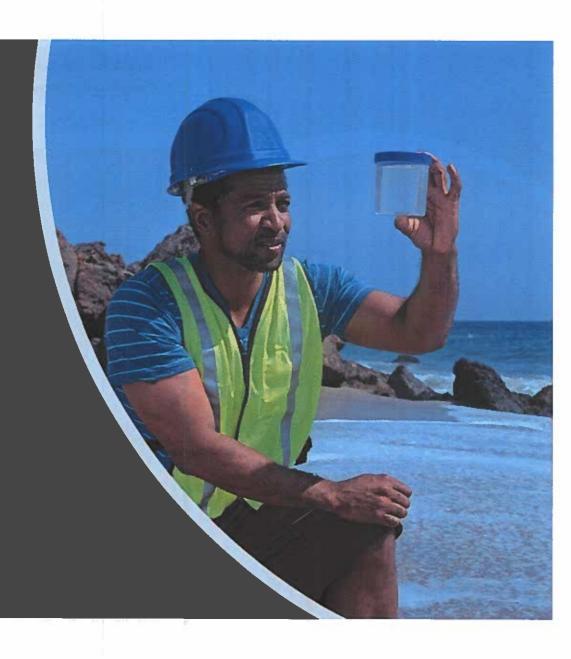
### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Funds can only be used for water quality improvements in Suffolk County

Lockbox ensures funds are used only for water quality purposes

Advisory committee and Board of Trustees will oversee fund

Annual, independent audits will be made public



# CLEAN WATER SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Provide about 70% reduction in Nitrogen from wastewater

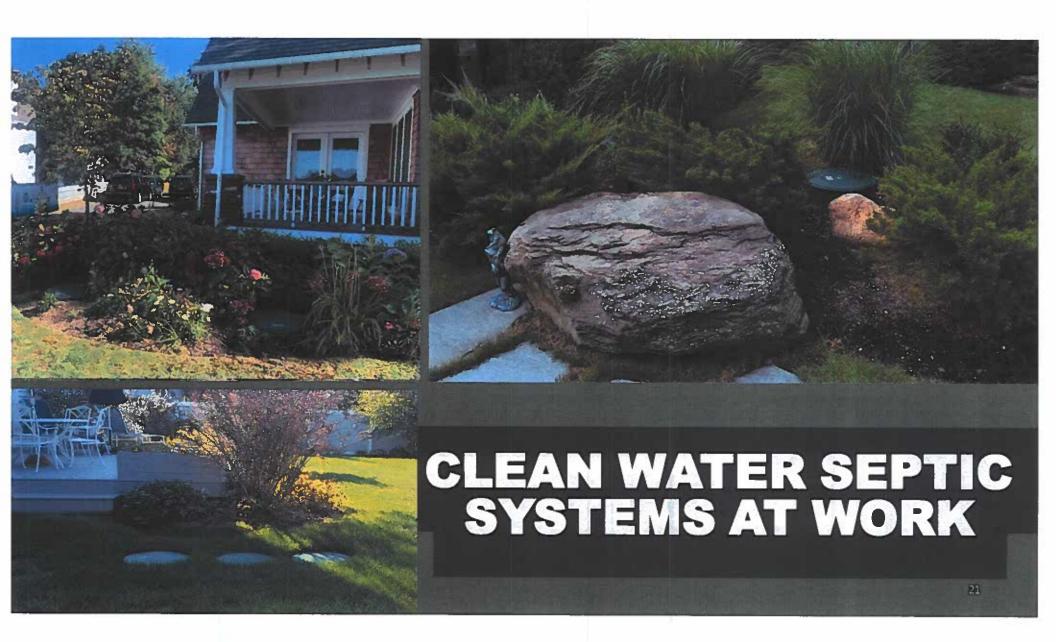
Average cost to replace an existing sanitary system with an I/A OWTS unit and new leaching is \$26,000

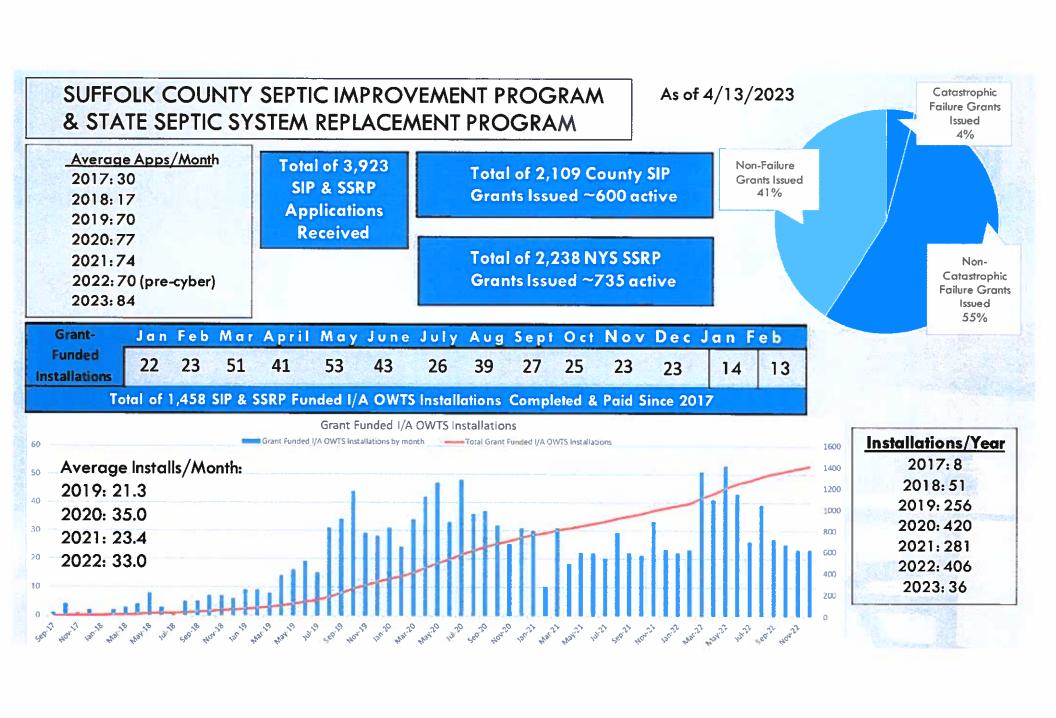
I/A OWTS with General Use & Provisional Use Approval in Suffolk County:

- Hydro-Action AN
- Fuji Clean CEN
- SeptiTecj STAAR
- Orenco Advantex AX
- Norweco HydroKinetic
- Norweco Singular TNT

Apply for grants at:

ReclaimOurWater.info/Septic-Improvement-Program





### **Grant Funded Installations To Date**

Town	I/A OWTS Installs Count	County SIP Grant Funding	State SSRP Grant Funding	Total Grant Funding
Babylon	19	\$215,672.78	\$178,190.50	\$393,863.28
Riverhead	25	\$270,121.00	\$243,715.78	\$513,836.78
Smithtown	31	\$332,666.14	\$298,754.60	\$631,420.74
Huntington	60	\$633,111.82	\$593,736.06	\$1,226,847.88
Islip	80	\$945,001.00	\$769,877.71	\$1,714,878.71
Shelter Island	87	\$840,341.00	\$832,244.30	\$1,672,585.30
Southold	90	\$985,445.50	\$874,035.50	\$1,859,481.00
Brookhaven	228	\$2,626,337.15	\$2,191,717.76	\$4,818,054.91
East Hampton	396	\$3,234,119.98	\$3,840,355.23	\$7,074,475.21
Southampton	458	\$4,208,780.19	\$4,374,165.26	\$8,582,945.45
Total	1,474	\$14,291,596.56	\$14,196,792.70	\$28,488,389.26

Town	Year 2024 – PHASE IIA Near Shore Areas + Ground Water Priority Rank 1	Phase IIA Percentage	Year 2037 - PHASE IIC All Areas in IIA PLUS Surface Water Priority Rank 1	Phase IIC Percentage
Babylon	588	1%	3,898	4%
Huntington	4,859	4,859 6%		16%
Smithtown	5,371	7%	36	0%
Islip	4,811	6%	23,295	26%
Brookhaven	19,774	24%	32,144	35%
Riverhead	3,080	4%	2,028	2%
Southold	9,945	12%	748	1%
Southampton	17,891	22%	11,215	12%
East Hampton	12,639	16%	3,176	3%
Shelter Island	1,913	2%	129	0%

### August 14, 2019 Newsday Editorial

"It's time to take a stand.
Lawmakers should either let
Suffolk residents vote on the
county's proposal to fund the
war on nitrogen, or offer their
own plan. Neither silence or
obstruction are options."

#### **EDITORIAL**

## We can turn the ugly tide

LI shouldn't accept life surrounded by polluted waters. We can take bold steps now to clean our bays, rivers, ocean and Sound.

#### OF THE CHESTAN, MARIE

as Long belond, we find currations drawn to the waters that water to place as with and boat, as fish and sunf, to puddle and both, after the water within and both, and cut dissues within garding its shoots, strucks out befine it to read a good booth, and cut dissues within garding at the momental beauty. For some of its, it's a place to play, I've a negare for nouries safe a necetarry for our overwarded action.

This over the years, we've trained it hadly—waterly, lydomplain altough—waterly, by domplain altough it is. Some of that comes from the fortiflaces we see on our favous and crops. A little contest from the example and only to the set the waterly of it course from the composite and expets fraish that translenguagely Clima and expets and as worsh.

We know all this. The science is such

We also know what caces altrogenhas done to our water.

It has feeled the alged blooms that have decimated our cheffishing industry, it has shilled much of the eed genan that makes up the marshined that protect me from samma. It has depisted protect in from samma. It has depisted wrights first caused survive, as in three-big this bills in the Proceeds filver in 2003. It can trave some shape, the Agarwan Lake in fausthampton and Lake Russhabahama, so mark that originating and other activities in them are beaused.

At each a long time, and loss of stanton and public education, but most Long laboriers understand well the segious attempts publics. They also understand that according

They also understand that expediing must be done to eddeen it.

So we welcome a new report from Suffoli. County that lays out the probless in courting detail, analyzing the



varieshanh — meface voitee, not delahing vanier, though nitregan fevella sire creeping up in some widh, you. Have a hook contine. The report checks the hun for eclemifier type, and confirms what works near with our own eyes. It sho chares a venuello plots forward, Nochares a venuello plots forward, No-

And while it makes a questioling coor for exiting with vegency, it also eathers orytimism— that by taking the appropriale steps starting now, and moving steadily farmand, we can receive the treads of intronsing uttragen within 10 years. Stony Brook University shows similar uttrogen lesses, and it should serve as a catalyst for that county to take similar steps.

Suffolk's strategy is a familiar one, put into eventries, it calls for trapeting beams not commercial to severe women 100,000, nearly 23 percent of all houses in the county...?

That makes occur; one study of the Great Stath Bay shows that easily 20 percent of the altrogets there comes from one-would house. morand to sewers where density matter than figurible. Thanks so public votes this year in forest of sever expansions, morae \$360 million in festeral and state gather will be sport to commer roughly 2000 houses in Indyine Town, Oaldah and Martie. That's a gram start mental the projects' eventual goal of 30,000.

The country peopones to complement that by expanding the efforts to work with hunterovers to explicit consposit and anothe systems with temperature hightuck systems for another temperature, wheely it would begin with homes to high principly areas where it takes the home generate of these for groundwater editrogen to enach our takes, every, territories and heys.

Suffolk created its programs from nerasts, testing and approving sherrathive systems, training such approving sherrathive systems, training such and considered programs and the principal state stooney for grases to haby homeowners made the princip consequences, which can count up to \$22,0000, With 3x2 units installed or approved under the grant programs, if time on comp up and the maximers in the plan are high — TELPOO replacements ower the next 30 years at an average countried cost of \$4st million pro years. More will be sempond out in the years offer that.

With near-entiversal buy-in on the send to actach the attragen problem, the big question near is where to get the money. Some state funding in evalable, but a recurring source of revenue

to accusion.

The predictived collections in to past a few on water emage above wheat's cyplically used for exemutal streets, Soffish.

Country residences would have to some on a veferoenteers on our each is fine, estimated at about \$270 a year fee the average homeowners. Getting much a proposition on the 2020 ballos likely will require action by conservy and etter few-making, but no memy of them have making, but no many of them have during the time.

It's time to take a stand, Lowenships about a licher in Suffah seskieper wate on the country's program to fund the war on sitzogen, or offer their awa plus. Neither illence are obstruction are option.

This is a key mounted. We either work to pur a plant into action and prounts what's been happening, or continue to watch our waters degra-

If you've wandering whether Suffalls can affind to tackle the problem, took at the water all around you and ask yournelf the seal question;

25

### **SOME OF THE CLEAN WATER PLAN SUPPORTERS**

- Long Island Federation of Labor/AFL-CIO
- Nassau Suffolk Building Trades Council
- Long Island Contractors Association (LICA)
- Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees (AME)
- Hauppauge Industrial Association (HIA)
- Citizens Campaign for the Environment
- The Nature Conservancy
- · Group for the East End
- · Long Island Regional Planning Council
- Wyandanch Community Development Corp.
- NY League of Conservation Voters
- Ocean Sewage Alliance
- Wyandanch Union Free School District
- · Long Island Lobby Coalition

- Friends of Georgica Pond Foundation
- The North Shore Land Alliance
- Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District
- Huntington Mobilization for Sustainability (HUMuS)
- Atlantic Marine Conservation Society
- · Urban League of Long Island
- Friends of Connetquot
- Plumbers Local Union 200
- Laborers Local 1298
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- Seatuck Environmental Association
- Village Preservation Society of East Hampton
- · Accabonac Protection Committee

- Kings Park Chamber of Commerce
- Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers
- · Greater Smithtown Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. Grella of TBR LTE
- Dr. Christopher Gobler, SBU School of Marine & Atmospheric Sciences
- Greater Huntington Council of Yacht & Boating Clubs
- Greenlawn Civic Association
- Three Village Civic Association
- Deer Park Civic Association
- Belmont Lake Civic Association
- · Selden Civic Association
- Friends of the Bay
- · Long Island Pine Barrens Society
- Concerned Citizens of Montauk

### WHAT'S NEXT

Implementing the Suffolk County Clean Water Plan requires approval first from elected officials and then local voters.

Help us ensure Suffolk County voters get the opportunity to vote on the Clean Water Plan.

Urge Suffolk County leaders to vote to place the 'Water Quality Restoration Act' on the ballot this Election Day.

