



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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East Hampton Adopts Strictest Nitrogen Reduction Requirements in Suffolk and a Rebate Program to Protect Water Quality

The East Hampton Town Board today adopted legislation that will require all new home construction and new commercial development to use Suffolk County's new low-nitrogen waste systems. Effective January 1, 2018, new construction and substantial expansion of existing residential and commercial buildings will be required to install the new onsite waste treatment systems. East Hampton has adopted the strictest requirements of any community in Suffolk County.

Also today, the Town Board adopted legislation to establish an incentive to existing property owners throughout Town to replace their septic systems with low-nitrogen systems by offering a rebate of up to \$16,000 for all property owners. Funding for the rebates will come from the Community Preservation Fund (CPF), which will generate an estimated \$150 million for water-quality improvements in East Hampton over the next 30 years. In November 2016, the CPF law was extended to 2050 in a Townwide referendum, receiving 78% approval by the voters.

"Protecting water quality is our highest priority because our quality of life and economy depend on safe drinking water and pristine surface water," said Town Supervisor Larry Cantwell.

"The Town Board has adopted the highest standard for water quality protection, and the rebate program should encourage property owners to replace failing waste systems with low-nitrogen alternatives," said Deputy Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc.

The Town of East Hampton will begin accepting applications for the rebate program, which will be coordinated with Suffolk County's grant program, on September 1, 2017. Interested applicants may contact the Town's Natural Resources Department at (631) 324-0496 or NaturalResources@EHamptonNY.gov.

The Town has identified more than 19,000 individual existing septic systems, including more than 12,500 parcels with antiquated cesspools, many of which are classified as failing. Traditional septic systems are the largest source of nitrogen entering the Town's ground- and surface waters. Nitrogen pollution—the greatest threat to the health of the Town's water bodies—results in harmful algal blooms, low dissolved oxygen, and bacterial contamination, leading to the closures

of shellfishing areas and swimming beaches. Cyanobacteria, which is associated with high nitrogen levels and has been linked to respiratory and gastrointestinal distress in humans and death in animals, has been found in Georgica Pond and Wainscott Pond.

By supporting the use of low-nitrogen sanitary systems that will significantly reduce the amount of nitrogen in sanitary system effluent, this rebate program will have a positive impact on human health and recreation, as well as the Town's natural resources and traditional fishing industry.