



## NSC Outreach Plan for Municipalities

### Template

Nitrogen pollution is the leading cause of water quality deterioration harming Long Island's estuaries and drinking water. Nitrogen pollution fuels algal growth in surface waters, which leads to low oxygen conditions, fish kills, degraded salt marshes and marine habitat loss. Nitrogen also contaminates the groundwater, the sole source of Long Island's drinking water. The sources of nitrogen pollution on Long Island are wastewater, stormwater runoff, fertilizers, atmospheric deposition, and pet waste.

The municipality has adopted a pledge to become a Nitrogen Smart Community, a voluntary program developed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Long Island Regional Planning Council (LIRPC) and is committed to taking meaningful and significant actions to eliminate, reduce, or prevent nitrogen pollution through a coordinated community-specific plan of action. The Town believes that public education, outreach and engagement are critical for informing the public of the harmful impacts of nitrogen pollution and for enlisting community support to take action to abate the problem. Widespread public awareness to understand what is at stake is a prerequisite to taking steps to making meaningful change.

The primary goals of the Nitrogen Smart Community education and outreach plan are to:

- Educate the community about the detrimental effects of nitrogen pollution on surface waters and drinking waters throughout Long Island and the municipality.
- Inform the community of the municipality's commitment to participate in the Nitrogen Smart Communities Program to identify the unique sources of nitrogen and to commit to reduction activities.
- Communicate how the community will participate in the NSC program through appropriate technical, management, regulatory and policy actions.
- Create partnerships with existing organizations and groups within the community whose purpose aligns with the Nitrogen Smart Community Program.

Multiple strategies will be employed by the municipality to meet the community outreach goals. Examples below:

- Create a Nitrogen Smart Community Website and Social Media Campaign - The municipality's Facebook page and website are important tools for education and outreach. The Town will use these pages to educate residents about the Nitrogen Smart Community program, the harmful effects of nitrogen pollution and specific initiatives to address the problems.
- Conduct public workshops and webinars focused on how community members can participate in specific nitrogen pollution activities.
- Utilize the provided nitrogen source educational templates, posting them at frequently visited public locations such as libraries, parks, etc.