



NSC Community 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.

[MUNICIPALITY NAME] 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) as part of the Long Island Watershed Program (LIWP) and is committed to taking meaningful and significant actions to eliminate, reduce, or prevent nitrogen pollution through a coordinated community-specific plan of action. [MUNICIPALITY NAME] believes that public education, outreach and engagement are critical for informing the public of the harmful impacts of nitrogen pollution and for engaging 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 make meaningful change.

Goals of the NSC Outreach Plan

(Examples provided below. Choose what fits your community and/or add your own)

- Educate the community about the detrimental effects of nitrogen pollution on surface waters and groundwater 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.
- Inform the community that an Advisory Taskforce has been created and will work as the central body of leadership of the NSC program; with the role of the Advisory Taskforce to help guide the development and execution of the municipality's NSC Program.
- Communicate how the community will participate in the NSC program through appropriate technical, management, regulatory and policy actions.

- Create and strengthen partnerships with existing organizations and groups within the community whose purpose aligns with the Nitrogen Smart Community Program.

Target Audience

The target audience for the community outreach plan may include residents, local businesses, civic organizations, environmental groups, schools, municipal officials, and community stakeholders who are directly or indirectly impacted by local water quality issues. Special emphasis will be placed on engaging homeowners, whose daily activities can influence nitrogen loading in local waterways. Outreach efforts will aim to increase public awareness of the sources and impacts of nitrogen pollution and offer actionable guidance that residents can carry forward and implement.

Outreach Strategies and Activities

(Examples provided below. Choose what fits your community and/or add your own)

- Nitrogen Smart Community Website and Social Media Campaign - The [municipality's] social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) and website are important tools for education and outreach. The Town/Village/City will use these pages to educate residents about the Nitrogen Smart Community program, the impacts of nitrogen pollution and specific initiatives to address the problems.
- Public workshops and webinars focus on how community members can participate in specific nitrogen pollution reduction activities.
- Utilize the provided nitrogen source educational materials in public venues, posting them at frequently visited public locations such as libraries, parks, etc. If possible, please name specific locations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities within the community outreach plan may be shared amongst the municipality staff working on the NSC program, Advisory Taskforce, local government representatives, community organizations, and volunteers to ensure effective implementation.

(Suggested responsibilities listed below. Choose what fits your community and/or add your own)

- Program Coordinator: oversee the execution of the outreach plan, manage communications, monitor progress, and coordinate partners.
- Advisory Taskforce: provide guidance, identify key stakeholders, and assist in promoting community participation.
- Municipality staff and local officials: disseminate information through existing networks, host public meetings, and support outreach events.
- Partner organizations and volunteers (list group): assist with event staffing, material distribution, and community engagement.