

PRESS RELEASE

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Water Protection Groups Announce "I Love Long Island" Campaign

Multi-Pronged Effort is Designed to Curb Use of Lawn Pesticides and High Nitrogen Fertilizers

(Sayville, NY) A broad coalition of non-profit and community groups today announced the creation of a public awareness campaign to reduce the use of chemical pesticides and high nitrogen fertilizers on Long Island. The "[I Love Long Island](#)" campaign is designed to provide the citizens of Long Island with a simple and effective way they can help reduce pollution of its ground and surface waters..

"We know that what we put on our lawns goes into our groundwater, and eventually into our drinking water and our bays, rivers and ponds," says Marshall Brown, President of Save the Great South Bay and one of the architects of the campaign. "Pesticides are toxic by definition, and lawn fertilizers contribute to the devastating algal blooms and fish kills we're seeing around Long Island. We're asking people to take the simple step of eliminating those pollutants at their source - their lawns."

The "[I Love Long Island](#)" campaign is a multi-dimensional program that includes a consumer *Pledge* not to use pesticides or high nitrogen fertilizers, colorful yard signs for homeowners, online listings of landscapers offering natural lawn care services, and in-store signage for participating retailers. Pledge cards and lawn signs are being distributed through dozens of local organizations. Residents can also sign the Pledge online at the campaign website, www.ILoveLongIsland.org.

"People need to understand that going chemical-free doesn't mean sacrificing a beautiful lawn and landscape," says Edwina von Gal, founder and President of the Perfect Earth Project. "We've proven that anyone can create a landscape that is not only aesthetically appealing, but also completely safe for people, pets and the environment."

"Pesticides and high nitrogen fertilizers are having an undeniable negative impact on the quality of our water," says Chris Quartuccio, President of the Blue Island Oyster Farm and a

founder of Operation Blue Earth. "The quality of that water has a direct bearing on the economic well-being of the Island, and the quality of life we all enjoy here."

A growing number of local landscape contractors are offering non-chemical lawn programs, and most lawn and garden centers carry non-toxic lawn care products and low nitrogen lawn fertilizers. A list of participating landscapers and retailers is available on the campaign website.

"We know that pesticides are harmful to everyone, especially children and pets, and excess nitrogen is contaminating our water," says Patti Wood, Executive Director of Grassroots Environmental Education, which designed the campaign. "We don't need to raise millions of dollars or wait for legislation to fix this part of our water problem. This is something we can do right now."

A growing list of non-profit organizations is supporting the campaign, including Save the Great South Bay, The Perfect Earth Project, Operation Blue Earth, Grassroots Environmental Education, Group for the East End, The Pine Barrens Society, Water for Long Island, Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE), The Peconic Baykeeper, Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor, Peconic Green Growth, The Sustainability Institute at Malloy College, Neighborhood Network, Operation Splash!, and the Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island (CRESLI).

More information at www.ILoveLongIsland.org.