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In the Works

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In The Works is a monthly newsletter providing Environment, Health and Safety (EH&S) news and regulatory updates. The newsletter is provided by Loureiro Engineering Associates, Inc. of Plainville, Connecticut. In this Issue you will find links to the following articles:

NEW YORK

New York DEC Announces Winners of 14th Annual Environmental Excellence Awards

State Recognizes New York Organizations and Municipalities as Innovation and Sustainability Leaders

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos recently recognized seven organizations for their state-of-the-art programs and commitment to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and economic viability at the 14th Annual New York State Environmental Excellence Awards celebration, held at Union College's Park Hall.

DEC Commissioner Seggos said, "I am proud to present this year's Environmental Excellence Awards to municipalities and organizations that are demonstrating outstanding leadership by adopting innovative solutions to protect our environment and strengthen our economy. These projects set a high bar for others to follow as we collectively address critical environmental issues such as fighting climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting pollinator habitats critical to our agricultural economy, advancing the use of electric vehicles, protecting the vitality of our waterways, and keeping potentially hazardous materials out of landfills. Congratulations to all of our outstanding award winners."

At the event, the awards were presented by DEC acting Chief of Staff Julie Tighe.

This year's award winners set an example for others across the state by implementing innovative energy efficiency programs, engaging students and communities in sustainable practices, harnessing the power of creative partnerships, and generating economic growth. The winners include:

1. Bethlehem School District's Green Team (Albany County): Bethlehem School District is an outstanding model of innovative environmental education and student engagement. Almost a decade ago, the district formed a "Green Team," a partnership of dedicated administrators, teachers, parents, and students cultivating environmental awareness, responsibility, and leadership in the district's schools, as well as within the larger community. The district demonstrates an impressive and wide-reaching educational model that has resulted in annual accomplishments that include recycling more than 96,000 pounds of paper, composting more than 20,000 pounds of food waste, donating more than 1,000 pounds of fresh, organic produce to the Bethlehem Food Pantry, and partnering with a local restaurant to offer a special menu featuring produce grown in the school's gardens.
2. Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Economic Development's Stewardship of Aquatic Resources (Chautauqua County): Most New York municipalities collect an occupancy tax from visitors who stay in hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. Instead of being placed in a general fund, Chautauqua County invests the revenue in projects and programs that promote the sustainable use of its natural resources. This approach demonstrates the important connection between having healthy lakes, streams, and ponds while also enjoying a strong tourism-based economy. Over the past eight years, the county has invested \$2.6 million from the hotel occupancy tax revenue in water quality improvement projects. As a result, the county has received plans for an estimated \$50 million in hotel and hospitality investments. Chautauqua County's water resource improvements include: removing nearly 14 million pounds of aquatic vegetation from Chautauqua Lake; eliminating more than 360 tons of soil entering waterways through various soil stabilization projects; and reducing nearly 400 pounds of phosphorus and 850 pounds of nitrogen from entering waterways by investing in green infrastructure such as rain gardens, vegetated swales, and porous pavements.
3. Hudson River Sloop Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival Zero Waste Initiative (Westchester County): Clearwater's longtime strategy of inspiring, educating, and engaging people is a powerful formula for success. The Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival (Revival) began in 1978 as a series of small concerts to increase environmental awareness and raise funds for the Sloop Clearwater. Today, it is a national model for organizations wishing to reduce the environmental footprint of large public events. The annual revival draws up to 20,000 attendees, in addition to at least 1,500 volunteers, musicians, and vendors. Event coordinators offer a sustainable event that actively engages attendees in waste reduction, recycling, composting, and sustainable living. Composting and recycling stations are conveniently set up around the festival grounds and trained volunteers help people put things in correct bins and take care of materials disposed of incorrectly. The event has, over the past several years, diverted an impressive 80 percent of waste from landfill including 4 tons of recyclables and 33 tons of compostable material.

4. NYS Department of Transportation Region 4 and Seneca Park Zoo Society's Pollinator Protection Project (Livingston County): This innovative effort by the New York State Department of Transportation's (DOT) Region 4 office demonstrates a commitment to sustainability, motorist safety, and pollinator habitat protection. The initiative directly supports the Pollinator Protection Plan to Protect New York's Agricultural Economy developed by Governor Andrew Cuomo's Pollinator Task Force. In 2015, DOT Region 4 modified the mowing schedule for a six-mile section of Interstate I-390 between Route 408 (Mt. Morris) and Route 258 (Sonyea) near Rochester. This 93-acre area offers refuge for migrating monarch butterflies and other pollinators. As a result, there are now more than 18 species of naturally regenerating wildflowers and grasses providing food and habitat for pollinators. Bees and butterflies are now able to successfully complete their life-cycle without being disrupted or damaged by mowing. DOT Region 4 is working in partnership with the Seneca Park Zoo Society and two interpretive gardens are now thriving at the Mount Morris and Geneseo Rest Areas. Nearly 13,300 vehicles travel this section of I-390 each day. Educational signs at the gardens give rest area visitors information about the plight of pollinators and provide tips about what New Yorkers can do to protect these important species.
5. Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority's Go Green School Recycling Program (Oneida County): Dedicated to advancing innovative solid waste solutions, the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority has helped pioneer the greening of Oneida and Herkimer counties. The authority has been recognized as a national model for its regional recycling efforts. The authority's Go Green School Recycling Program is an example of a well-designed and creatively implemented education/outreach and engagement program, which involves all but two of the 30 public and private school systems in the two-county area. In addition, the authority's Recycling Educator successfully engages students, teachers, custodians, parents, and school faculty in recycling and composting programs. Participating school districts realize significant benefits, including substantially reducing waste being generated, helping to reduce greenhouse gas generation, conserving natural resources, and achieving direct cost savings. One elementary school is now annually diverting 10 tons of material from the landfill while sending 40 tons of material for recycling, which means an annual savings of nearly \$2,000.
6. Ulster County's Net Carbon Neutral Operations (Ulster County): Ulster County has received national recognition for its outstanding commitment to environmental stewardship and is one of only three New York municipalities certified by DEC as a Bronze Level Climate Smart Community. County leadership is dedicated to increasing the county's energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy generation. Specifically, Ulster County is purchasing 100 percent green electricity from sustainable sources, prohibiting all food service providers from using polystyrene foam, and promoting safer alternatives; expanding and improving the operation of the composting facility at the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency in Kingston; greening and right-sizing their vehicle fleet by adding seven plug in hybrid sedans and one all-electric vehicle in 2017; and installing a network of nine charging stations at county-owned

facilities. This is the greatest number of municipal electric vehicle charging sites in the State, including New York City. The chargers, powered by renewable energy, provided nearly 1,400 charging sessions, saving more than 1,700 gallons of gas.

DEC established the Environmental Excellence Awards in 2004 to recognize those who are working to improve and protect New York's environment and contribute to a healthier economy by advancing sustainable practices and forming creative partnerships. To date, DEC has recognized 80 award winners. They are an elite group of committed organizations leading by example and serving as models of excellence within their industry and community. Union College, host of this year's award ceremony, was an award recipient in 2008 for its campus-wide commitment to sustainability. A statewide review committee, made up of 20 representatives from the public and private sectors, shared advice in selecting the award winners from an array of competitive applications received in May.

For additional information about the program and past winners, and to learn about applying for the 2018 Environmental Excellence Awards, visit New York's DEC website.

MASSACHUSETTS

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$4.1 Million for Local and Regional Recycling Efforts

57 Massachusetts Communities Awarded Grants on 'America Recycles Day'

To celebrate America Recycles Day, the Baker-Polito Administration in Massachusetts recently announced more than \$4.1 million in Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) grants to 57 communities, regional groups and non-profit organizations to help increase the diversion, reuse, composting and recycling of materials in the solid waste stream.

“Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grants are an opportunity for the Commonwealth to partner with cities and towns to protect our environment and encourage recycling that will lead to less greenhouse gas emissions and save money on waste disposal,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “Through the SMRP, our administration remains committed to supporting local waste reduction efforts that improve the health of our communities and the vitality of our businesses.”

“Cities and towns lead the way when it comes to recycling and composting, and it makes a difference in the quality of life for all of our residents,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “These grants provide the funding necessary for communities to tailor their individual recycling programs to the needs of their citizens.”

During the second round of 2017 SMRP funding, 57 communities will receive grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$405,500, for a total of \$4,101,026 statewide. Funds have been awarded in several categories, including start-up incentives for Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) recycling programs, mattress recycling incentives, wheeled-carts for curbside collection of recycling and kitchen food waste for composting, large containers for collection of target materials at

municipal transfer stations, funding for local enforcement coordinators, school recycling assistance programs, and projects to build organics capacity and support innovative waste reduction.

“The Commonwealth has an aggressive goal of reducing the waste stream by 50 percent by 2020, and these grants will help communities move closer to that goal,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. “By encouraging recycling, we can save money on waste disposal costs, cut greenhouse gas emissions, create renewable energy, and stimulate the economy.”

The SMRP grant program was created under the Green Communities Act and is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Waste prevention and recycling efforts like these reduce greenhouse gas emissions by capturing the embodied energy in every-day product and packaging waste and converting these sources into new products with a smaller carbon footprint.

“By awarding these grants, we partner with local communities to find a better way to utilize these reusable materials, and that effort makes a significant difference for the environment and the public health,” said MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg. “It is important to convert paper, metal and plastic packaging into a much-needed feedstock for new materials.”

A list of the community, regional group or non-profit organizations that have been awarded grants, as well as more information about the SMRP program, can be on the MassDEP website.

The Green Communities Act requires that a portion of the proceeds from the sale of Waste Energy Certificates (WECs) be directed to recycling programs approved by MassDEP. The WEC payments received by MassDEP are deposited into the SMRP Expendable Trust, which is used to fund grants, technical assistance and education to help communities, businesses and institutions increase recycling and reduce waste. The SMRP program has provided more than \$28 million for recycling programs.