

Port Washington Water District Applauds the Governor's Commitment to Fund Long Island Aquifer Study

Port Washington, NY (February 23, 2016) – The Port Washington Water District (PWWD) is thrilled about Governor Cuomo's recent announcement to commit six million dollars to study Long Island's aquifer system – the source of all Long Island's drinking water. Studying the aquifer system throughout Nassau and Suffolk County and collecting the science-driven data needed will help to determine the sustainability of an aquifer system compromised by saltwater intrusion, toxic plumes, changes in the groundwater recharge and a projected rise in the sea level.

“Long Island's water supply, particularly western Long Island, has a whole host of issues that require further examination to determine its sustainability,” said David Brackett, Chairman of the Port Washington Water District's Board of Commissioners. “By investigating the issues facing our aquifer system now, we will finally know if our pumping levels and well locations need to be adjusted to ensure a continued supply of water for decades to come.”

Earlier this month, the Western Long Island Aquifer Committee, through Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington, drafted and sent a letter to the New York State Legislature, which was co-signed by the Port Washington Water District and more than 75 additional water suppliers, elected officials, environmentalists, scientists and civic associations. The letter requested that funds be appropriated to study the current conditions of Long Island's aquifers. The basis for the requested study was outlined by Frederick Stumm and Paul E. Misut of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) who prepared a comprehensive plan to fund a management tool described in “Analysis of the Hydrogeologic Framework, Groundwater Availability and Water – Supply Sustainability of Western Long Island.”

“Using scientific data and collaborating with our fellow water districts, elected officials and civic organizations will enable us to shape sensible policy initiatives, design responsible management protocols and implement conservation measures as needed,” said Mindy Germain, Port Washington Water District Commissioner and Executive Director of Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington. “We are proud that our Governor is willing to provide the resources required to look into the challenges facing Long Island's water supply.”

In 2000, the Port Washington Aquifer Committee facilitated by Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington secured funds to build a hydrogeological modeling tool with the USGS. Since then, these partnerships have been an example of industry “best practices” as water districts, elected officials, environmentalists and civic groups have worked together in planning and managing this vital natural resource. It was through these partnerships a fight to reopen the controversial Queens County wells—wells if continued to be drawn from would increase the level of saltwater intrusion in Nassau County—was won.

For more information about the quality of Port Washington's drinking water, please contact the PWWD at 516-767-0171 or visit www.pwwd.org.