

## Promoting Cost-Effective Municipal Stormwater Management

**P**olluted stormwater is a primary cause of impairments to the Long Island Sound, the Peconic Estuary, and the South Shore Estuary Reserve. Collectively, such contaminants as bacteria, sediment, debris, nutrients, and toxic substances pose serious economic as well as human health concerns.

Municipalities play a central role in addressing these issues. As operators of storm sewer systems, municipalities are responsible for implementing stormwater management programs as required by the Clean Water Act's Phase II regulations. Complex and far-ranging, Phase II presents financial and technical challenges that affect most aspects of local government.

The New York Sea Grant Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials Program (NYSG NEMO) has helped meet these challenges on Long Island by promoting cost-effective intermunicipal Phase II efforts that advance watershed-based resource protection priorities. Such multi-jurisdictional stormwater programs ensure consistencies of policy as well as efficiencies of scale in revising procedures, conducting operations, utilizing equipment, and providing training.

In 2007, NYSG NEMO launched an email communications program known as the Phase II-L.I. listserve. Now at more than 100 members, Phase II-L.I. expedites dialogue among the municipal Phase II community and provides a forum through which stormwater



*Reducing the impacts of polluted stormwater poses many challenges to Long Island local governments. Photo: Eileen Keenan, NYSG NEMO*

managers initiate working relationships and exchange information, expertise, and experience. As a result, successful approaches and projects are replicated while funds and staff time are conserved.

Further, the listserve has helped NYSG NEMO to improve its timely response to requests for support and to disseminate important guidance materials, funding announcements, and stormwater management updates from the National NEMO Network.

NYSG NEMO's role as an inter-municipal liaison is a vital component of the support it provides to Long Island municipalities. With growing financial and technical capacity, municipal leaders will continue making strides in protecting the Island's beautiful coast and estuarine resources.

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