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## New Local Program Urges Recycling Old Fishing Lines

"Reel Recycling" program aims to safeguard swimmers, boaters and marine wildlife and keep bays tangle-free.

By [Lauren Urban](#) | [Email the author](#) | August 19, 2011 | [Print](#)

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Hempstead Town Supervisor Kate Murray speaks at an Aug. 18 press conference to kick off the "Reel Recycling" program Credit: [Lauren Urban](#)

Hempstead Town Supervisor Kate Murray and Councilwoman Angie Cullin, R-Freeport, announced Thursday the launching of "Reel Recycling," a program to promote the proper disposal of monofilament fishing line, in order to protect marine wildlife and keep our bays tangle-free.

The program – the first of its kind in Nassau County – was kicked off with a press conference at [Seamans Neck Park](#) in Seaford Thursday morning. In addition to Murray and Cullin, attendees included Hempstead's Receiver of Taxes Donald Clavin and Town Clerk Mark Bonilla, as well as various project partners.

When not properly recycled, fishing line poses a serious threat to wildlife, entrapping seagulls, turtles and other marine life and shore birds.

"When not disposed of properly, monofilament fishing line can be damaging to our environment and harmful to our precious wildlife," said Murray. "Hempstead Town's Reel Recycling program will help keep our bays tangle-free."

Murray added that fishing line also creates a hazard for swimmers and boaters, as the line can become entangled in boat propellers, resulting in stranded boaters and costly repairs.

Now, fishing line can be deposited into specially designed recycle bins stationed at 10 sites, including Guy Lombardo Marina, Inwood Marina, Point Lookout East Marina, Point Lookout West Marina, Woodmere Docks, Shell Creek Park, Seaman's Neck Park, Seaford Docks, Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve and Harbor Isle Park. The receptacles are exclusively for monofilament fishing line; cans, bottles and trash are not permitted.

President Rob Weltner of SPLASH, one of the project partners, said, "Hempstead Town is helping keep our bays free of dangerous old fishing line with these recycling units, and we are proud to partner with the town on working toward cleaner bays and waterways."

"[The program] is yet one more example of the town's proactive and progressive approach to protecting the environment and our valuable marine resources," said Jay Tanski, senior coastal processes and facilities specialist for the New York Sea Grant Program, another project partner.

Other project partners include the New York Marine Trades Association, the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council and the Hempstead Shellfisherman's Association.

"It's easy to recycle, and our marine life and birds thank all of our fishermen for doing the right thing," Murray concluded.

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