



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Senator Skelos Announces Final Passage of Sewage Spill Notification Bill

DEAN G. SKELOS June 21, 2012

*Sewage Pollution Right To Know Act Protects Public Health
by Increasing Awareness of Water Conditions*

New York State Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos (R, Rockville Centre) today announced the final legislative passage of a bill that increases the amount of information available to the public when discharges of untreated or partially treated sewage to the state's waterways could affect public health. The Sewage Pollution Right to Know Act ([S6268D](#)) would require prompt notification of such sewage discharges so the public has the information they need to make decisions about swimming, boating, and fishing.

"Long Island's abundant water resources are a source of pride and enjoyment, but discharges of untreated sewage can jeopardize the health of these waters as well as the health of the public who uses them," Senator Skelos said. "This bill would give Long Islanders access to important information about sewage discharges that could affect public health so that we can prevent our families from being exposed to potentially harmful contamination."

Discharges of untreated or partially treated sewage to the state's waterways include contaminants and pollutants, pathogens, bacteria and toxins can raise public health, safety and environmental concerns. Current notification procedures have proven inadequate in disseminating information when discharges that could affect public health occur. Prompt notification of these discharge events would help the public have the information needed to limit recreational uses and activities so that people can be protected from potential exposure to contamination.

Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) or the operator of a publicly owned sewer system would be required to comply with expanded reporting requirements when a discharge occurs. When public health could be impacted, the bill includes a public notification requirement that would be specified upon development of regulations by the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

The bill has passed the Assembly and will be sent to the Governor.

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