



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

Zeldin, Murray: State DEC Announces Permit Modifications for L.I. Compost

LEE M. ZELDIN October 27, 2011

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YAPHANK, NY - In a new development regarding odor and dust complaints in Yaphank, New York State Senator Lee Zeldin (R, C, I- Shirley) and Assemblyman Dean Murray (R, C- East Patchogue) today announced that the state's Department of Environmental Conservation has informed Long Island Compost of a permit modification for certain operations.

The DEC modification removes the variance allowing the company to operate an un-enclosed transfer station; limits the size of mulch piles at the facility; and prohibits storage of uncured compost. A copy of the DEC's correspondence containing the modifications accompanies this release.

“In the last few months, we’ve been working in a good faith effort with LI Compost, the surrounding community, including the Brookhaven Community Coalition (BCC), and the DEC to bring a new spirit of effective cooperation to the long time concerns of local residents,” said Senator Zeldin. “I look forward to working with the community and LI Compost to preserve jobs, and promote good relations between LI Compost and its neighbors.”

"After months of working together with residents, civic groups, the owners and DEC officials, these recommendations are yet another step in reducing and eliminating the source of odors and dust that have affected the community, and allowing this business to continue to operate and perform the important service they provide for our community, and the environment," said Assemblyman Murray.

"In recent weeks I, along with Senator Zeldin and Assemblyman Murray, have been in frequent contact with DEC regarding Great Gardens. We were assured that DEC was conducting a top-to-bottom review of their operations and DEC permit. DEC's notification of significant modifications of Great Gardens' permit reflects the results of that comprehensive review. I commend Governor Cuomo, Commissioner Martens, and Regional Director Peter Scully for their quick and professional review of this matter," said Brookhaven Supervisor Mark Lesko.

The Department's action follows Senator Zeldin and Assemblyman Murray's October 10th announcement that they had reached an agreement with LI Compost to reduce their intake of grass clippings by 90% (approximately 35,000 tons), slashing a major source of foul odors. In addition, the state legislators announced that DEC Commissioner Joseph Martens has contacted them in response to their July 28th request to rewrite its Part 360 regulations concerning yard waste. According to Martens, the DEC is now reviewing these regulations, to give the DEC more power to regulate yard waste and debris processing. Currently, due to a court decision, the DEC has no regulatory authority over yard waste and debris, leaving regulation of these facilities largely to town and county governments.

Long Island Compost, which has operated at 445 Horseblock Road in Yaphank since 1998, employs approximately 180 people, and processes a majority of the yard waste collected by Brookhaven Town.