



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Grisanti sponsored “Sewage Pollution Right To Know Act” signed by governor law requires prompt information for all sewage spills

MARK GRISANTI August 13, 2012

| ISSUE: **ENVIRONMENT**

| COMMITTEE: **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

Image not found or type unknown



Senator Mark Grisanti (R-60) recently announced that Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed the “Sewage Pollution Right To Know Act” which passed the Senate in June.

This bill, which Grisanti introduced, amends the environmental conservation law to establish a procedure for the operator of any sewage treatment plant to notify the public of all raw sewage overflows within 24 hours. The bill spells out all the information that must be

reported to the New York State Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Conservation including when, where and how much has been spilled. The purpose of this legislation is to provide valuable information to the public about spills in a timely manner and in an effective way.

“I am pleased that there will now be a “Sewage Pollution Right to Know Act” for all New Yorkers who want to enjoy the many great bodies of water in our state. This law will ensure that the water people use for both recreational and commercial activities will not be threatened by bacteria, toxins or chemicals due to the spillage of raw sewage. When accidents do occur prompt notification and swift action for clean up must happen,” said Senator Mark Grisanti (R-60), Chairman of Senate Environmental Conservation Committee. “This law ensures protection of our water so people can have confidence when swimming, boating or fishing this summer.”

“The signing of this monumental public health law will help ensure that a trip to our favorite Great Lakes beach or fishing spot will not unknowingly become a trip to the emergency room. As Buffalo works to upgrade its degraded sewage infrastructure, it is essential that the public has the right to know when and where sewage overflows occur,” said Brian Smith, Program & Communications Director, Citizens Campaign for the Environment. “Citizens Campaign for the Environment commends Senator Grisanti, Assemblyman Sweeney, and Governor Cuomo for their leadership to protect the public from unnecessary exposure to harmful sewage pollution.”

“Sewage Pollution in the Niagara River is degrading water quality and having a direct effect on

the quality of people’s lives,” said Judith A. Enck, EPA Regional Administrator. “Local fish are inedible and people can’t enjoy recreational water sports or local parks because of sewage odors. Buffalo has made improvements to its combined system in recent years, but much

more must be done to protect people's health and water quality.”

Between 1.8 and 3.5 million Americans become ill annually from contact with recreational waters contaminated by sewage, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Contaminants from sewage can result in unhealthy fish populations and make people sick upon consumption. When heavily frequented beaches are put at risk of contamination and forced to close, not only are humans put at risk but there is an economic impact of \$1-2 billion annually across the US.