



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senator Ken LaValle, Assemblymen Steve Englebright and Dean Murray Pass Legislation to Regulate Commercial Mulch Operations

KENNETH P. LAVALLE June 17, 2015

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*The bill, which passed both houses of the legislature, seeks to regulate mulching facilities out of concern for public health, safety and welfare*

June 16, 2105 – Senator Ken LaValle, along with Assemblymen Steve Englebright and Dean Murray announce that the legislature has approved their measure to require commercial mulching facilities to comply with Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulations to minimize environmental harm, including minimizing fire risk, dust and odor.

Senator LaValle said, “The number of facilities that process debris and/or conduct mulching operations have grown significantly over recent years. The tremendous increase in volume of unregulated material handled at these sites impacts residents’ quality of life. These operations create noise and excessive amounts of dust and odors from unknown content, which permeate large swaths of the surrounding neighborhood. There are also real concerns over the fire hazards created by the mishandling of the mulch. Our bill will enable the DEC to properly regulate these facilities. It’s my hope that the Governor signs the bill into law immediately.”

“Recycling of organic materials is a critically important part of sustainable efforts to manage solid waste on Long Island,” said Assemblyman Steve Englebright. “But when odors, noise and dust from large-scale mulching operations sicken people in surrounding neighborhoods and seriously impact their ability to enjoy their homes, regulations that oversee these activities need to be stepped up. This legislation will go a long way towards ensuring that these activities can take place without significant impacts to the community and our environment.”

“Having the DEC regulate mulch operations such as this is a common sense solution to a problem that has plagued a number of our residents because facilities such as this have slipped through the cracks of our

laws.” said Assemblyman Dean Murray. “I worked to have the DEC implement amendments before Superstorm Sandy struck three years ago. We need to have the Governor sign this bill into law so the DEC can immediately resolve this for our communities.”

“Illegal mulch operations threaten the health and safety of the residents who live in the community where they are located because their operations have not been regulated,” said Supervisor Romaine. “This new law would enable the DEC to take appropriate action and regulate these mulching facilities so unscrupulous operators can be closed down. I want to thank Senator LaValle and Assemblymen Englebright and Murray for their leadership and support on this issue. I urge the Governor to sign this legislation into law to improve the quality of life of the people in Brookhaven Town who have been impacted by these mulching facilities.”

Back in April, the Legislators held a press conference with Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine highlighting the need for action concerning a commercial mulching company operating alongside residential homes in Middle Island. The DEC is the regulatory agency that can regulate organic waste generating facilities. According to the DEC, they have limited regulatory authority in the current solid waste regulations over these types of operations. The legislation will provide the tools necessary to address this problem.

Since the legislation has passed both the Senate and Assembly, it will now move to the Governor for consideration.

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