Supervisor Lesko announces that the Quality of Life Task Force enforcement actions result in over $1 million in fines levied.

Fines levied by the Quality of Life Task Force levies for violations of the code have increased 332% since 2008.

Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Mark Lesko announced that the Quality of Life Task Force levied $1,091,225 in fines over the course of 2011 as of December 15, 2011. These fines are the results of the Quality of Life Task Force aggressively enforcing the Town code and issuing tickets to offenders of the code who negatively impacted the quality of life of Town residents.

Supervisor Lesko formed the Quality of Life Task Force in the summer of 2009 to prosecute serial offenders of the Town code, shutdown suburban slumlords, and eliminate residential blight in neighborhoods. This year, the Quality of Life Task Force law investigators also participated in "Operation Clean Sweep," a coordinated effort with Town Departments including Waste Management and Parks that beautified six targeted neighborhoods in the Town. The $1,091,225 represents a 332% increase in fines levied since 2008.

"I created the Quality of Life Task Force so the Town would ramp up its efforts to improve the quality of life in our communities and prosecute serial offenders. The Quality of Life Task Force continues to aggressively enforce the Town code against the most flagrant violators and has definitely made an impact in the Town since 2009," said Brookhaven Supervisor Mark Lesko, "I thank all of the Town employees who are dedicated to the Task Force and work tirelessly to ensure our communities are safe."

The Quality of Life Task Force is a coordinated effort between Town Departments to address code violations. For example, law investigators took the lead on investigations and issued violations to offenders to appear in Sixth District Court. For those cases which involved animal hoarding, the Brookhaven Animal Shelter assisted the Quality of Life Task Force and the SPCA and took in animals from these properties. The Animal Shelter successfully placed over 120 cats from hoarding situations in 2011. In addition, the Department of Waste Management conducted over 3,400 inspections related to litter, unregistered vehicles and other similar quality of life concerns and cleaned up tons of litter this year. The Quality of Life Task Force also closely coordinated with the Town's Housing inspectors and other law enforcement agencies, including the Suffolk County Police Department.

Some of the more egregious cases in 2011 where violations were issued include:

- Malba Drive, Shirley - Quality of Life Task Force investigators observed over 100 animals - dead and alive - including a cow, pig, and goats. Animal feces covered the home and the outside was littered with old tractor style lawn mowers, trailers, and wooden produce containers. The Task Force immediately notified several Suffolk County agencies, including the Suffolk County SPCA and the Suffolk County Police Department.
Photos show a cow and a flock of pigeons in the house on Malba Drive in Shirley.

North Sunrise Highway Service Road in Manorville - Working on a Brookhaven resident's complaint, the Quality of Life Task Force investigators found the dwelling to be a non-owner occupied, illegal multi-family rooming house with at least 34 occupants.

Photo shows the interior of the illegal multi-family house on the North Sunrise Service Road in Manorville.

Expressway Drive South in Holtsville - The action was executed after Town Fire Marshals were contacted by the Suffolk County SPCA and advised of a situation concerning animal hoarding. Quality of Life Task Force investigators, Public Safety and Animal Shelter personnel and members of the Building Department were dispatched to the scene. The residence was found to be covered in animal feces and a substantial amount of mold was found in the bathroom. The home was without an active smoke detector or an active carbon monoxide detector and contained 13 cats and 1 dog, which was found to be in poor health and impounded by the SPCA for eventual turn-over to the Brookhaven Animal Shelter.
Clean-ups in North Bellport - The Quality of Life Task Force and Department of Waste Management teamed up to get rid of debris strewn on the properties of three homes in North Bellport on Bourdois Avenue, Davis Avenue, and Walker Avenue.

Jamaica Avenue, Medford - Working on a resident’s complaint, the Quality of Life Task Force investigators found a dwelling to be in violation of town code as a non-owner occupied, illegal multi-family dwelling. It was determined that the main part of the house was being rented by approximately six occupants and the detached garage was converted to a two bedroom apartment with several occupants. The basement was also converted to habitable space containing two occupants.

Illegal Pool Hall in Medford - The Quality of Life Task Force investigators and Town Fire Marshals, in coordination with detectives of the Suffolk County 5th Precinct Crime Control Unit, responded to a compliant on Route 112 in Medford in regards to a pool hall that was allegedly operating without the necessary permits and certificates of occupancy from the Building Department and Fire Marshal's office.

Christian Avenue in Stony Brook - The premises had been under surveillance and investigation for some time, stemming from reports of disturbances and allegations that it was a multi-family dwelling with too many vehicles. The Quality of Life Task Force determined it was an illegal rooming house.

Coates Avenue, Holbrook - The Quality of Life Task Force, assisted by the Suffolk County 6th Precinct Crime Control Unit, executed a search warrant on an illegal four family dwelling. The living space in the basement, on the main floor, and on the second floor, and the detached garage were all found to be illegal living spaces.

Pool Safety - A series of violations were issued to unsafe swimming pools, some unfenced and in disrepair, in North Patchogue, Mastic, Miller Place, Coram, and Port Jefferson Station.
In addition to these cases, the Quality of Life Task Force spearheaded Operation Clean Sweep, which kicked off in April 2011 and successfully beautified targeted areas of Selden, Rocky Point, Mastic, Medford, Port Jefferson Station, and Farmingville. Over the course of several months, the Task Force aggressively focused on these neighborhoods and removed tons of litter, replaced and repaired street signs and street lamps, worked with property owners to bring properties up to code, and trimmed trees.

Operation Clean Sweep resulted in the removal of eight tons of trash, 800 street signs and 230 street lamps repaired or replaced, re-striping of cross walks, cleaning of catch-basins, sweeping of hundreds of streets, trimming of trees, and hundreds of properties being brought up to code. Notices were issued to residents for a wide range of violations, including unregistered vehicles, litter, parking on the front lawns and boats in the front yard. Appearance tickets were issued to violators for non-compliance and for illegal multi-family houses. Many residents have cooperated with the Town to correct the violations and come into compliance with Town code.

If residents believe that a property is in violation of any Town of Brookhaven codes, they can call 451-TOWN to file a complaint.

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