

Senator LaValle, Supervisor Romaine and DEC Assess Fish Kill in Port Jefferson Harbor

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Farmingville, NY – On September 27, New York State Senator Ken LaValle (center) and Town of Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine (right) met with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Director of Marine Services Jim Gilmore (left) to assess the fish kill in Port Jefferson Harbor. They were also joined by officials from Port Jefferson Village. The fish being affected are menhaden, commonly known as bunker. According to the DEC, they are likely being impacted by a mahogany tide bloom caused by the genus *cochlo dinium*, which is poisoning the fish. The fish are filter feeders so they tend to ingest large amounts of the algae and will likely die over a period of time as a result.

The NYSDEC is working with a commercial fisherman to remove some of the fish while they are still alive. During the weekend, 5,000 pounds were removed and they were expecting to remove an additional 20,000 pounds on Tuesday. There are similar fish kills occurring at north shore harbors including Huntington and Mattituck.

Supervisor Romaine said, "A contributing factor to the cause of mahogany tide is outdated septic systems that allow nitrogen to freely flow into our water table. As long as this continues, there will be more and more fish kills in our waterways. Brookhaven residents are fortunate to have an environmental advocate like Senator LaValle in their corner. Together, he and I will stay in contact with the DEC as they work to get this problem under control."

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