

Contact: Brett Spielberg – Public Information Officer
Office: 516-571-3249 / Cell: 516-329-5171
Email – bspiegelberg@nassaucountyny.gov
For Immediate Release – October 29, 2019



Office of the Nassau County Comptroller
Jack Schnirman – Comptroller
240 Old Country Road
Mineola, New York 11501
Tel: (516) 571-2386 • Fax: (516) 571-5900

**Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman Launches
“Resiliency Progress Tracker” on 7th Anniversary of Superstorm Sandy**

Resource launched for municipalities in their efforts to combat climate change locally and build stronger, more resilient, and safer communities

BAY PARK, NY – Seven years after Superstorm Sandy made landfall on Long Island, Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman, along with advocates from the New York League of Conservation Voters, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, and the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College announced the Resiliency Progress Tracker. The tracker, displayed on the *Open Nassau Transparency Hub*, makes information available for every municipality in the County to take a pledge—and become certified—as a NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Climate Smart Community.

The *Climate Smart Communities Program* is New York State’s effort to provide support, technical assistance, and leadership to local governments as they undertake actions to reduce emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. Governments can earn Climate Smart Community Certification through compliance with a comprehensive rating system so that municipalities can become more resilient and earn grant money from New York State.

Over 100,000 homes were damaged by Superstorm Sandy, and the financial cost to infrastructure within Nassau County was \$1.1 billion.

“Today is the 7th anniversary of Superstorm Sandy’s landfall on Long Island and the devastation that it unleashed,” said **Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman**. “Long-term resiliency planning and much-needed improvements and modernization in our systems and infrastructure will ensure that we are ready for future storms of similar magnitudes. The Resiliency Progress Tracker will allow us to make information available to every local government in the County to showcase and share progress in combating climate change and building stronger, safer communities.”

“Seven years ago, Superstorm Sandy was an unfortunate demonstration of the effects that climate change is having in Nassau County. This area is a perfect example of why resiliency and preparedness at all levels of government are vital in our efforts to act on climate change. Becoming a certified Climate Smart Community is a good way for local governments to let their residents know that they are taking meaningful steps to protect them from future storm damage and supporting the local green economy,”

said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**. “We thank Comptroller Jack Schnirman for making this part of his Resiliency Progress Tracker and for making the climate action a priority for local governments.”

“All of us must take meaningful actions to fight climate however, government has an added responsibility to lead the way and forge a path forward. Climate change is real, and we must change too in order to mitigate and adapt. Supporting offshore wind, reducing energy use and protecting wetlands and coastal habitats all make us stronger, cleaner and safer,” said **Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment**. “We are thrilled that Comptroller Schnirman is working to advance climate smart communities across our island.”

“Superstorm Sandy taught Long Islanders that we live on one of the front lines in the fight against global climate change,” said **Neal Lewis, Executive Director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College**.

There are seven communities in Nassau that participate in the program. Currently, there is only one Certified municipality in Nassau, and only 34 in the state of New York.

“Resiliency is not only the right thing for the safety of our community, but it’s also about investing in our economy and infrastructure.” **Schnirman** added. “Not only do investments in resiliency pay a return on quality of life, they also save taxpayer money in the long run. Every dollar invested in resiliency and hazard mitigation yields \$6 in future savings and every dollar spent on improving building codes to better withstand natural disasters saves society \$4. Simply, resiliency saves money and it also saves lives.”

Residents will be able to track the progress of their village, town, and county government in their resiliency work measured by a checklist of 12 categories of preparedness work, available on the *Open Nassau Transparency Hub* (opennassau.nassaucountyny.gov). The 12 categories of preparedness work the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation require to enter into this program are:

1. Build a climate-smart community;
2. Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action;
3. Decrease energy use;
4. Shift to clean, renewable energy;
5. Use climate-smart materials management;
6. Implement climate-smart land use;
7. Enhance community resilience to climate change;
8. Support a green innovation economy;
9. Inform and inspire the public;
10. Engage in an evolving process of climate action;
11. Innovation – Innovative approaches to Climate Smart Communities actions; and
12. Performance – Reduce greenhouse gases and solid waste.

The *Open Nassau Transparency Hub* also includes links to *The Comptroller’s Scorecard*, *Open Checkbook*, *Open Payroll*, *Open Budget*, and reports from the Comptroller’s Office Policy and Research Unit. There is no cost or registration requirements for the public to access these new platforms.

###