

Did you know?

If you have noticed many white 5-gallon buckets scattered throughout the restaurants and seafood establishments throughout the Town, there is a reason. The buckets are being used for the collection of shells. Why would the Town be interested in collecting shells, you may ask yourself? To improve our waterways.

The Town, with the help of REACH (Rotary Environmental Action Coalition of Huntington) has been busy distributing empty buckets to the shellfisheries around town, collecting the full buckets from the participating restaurants and businesses, depositing the shells at the Town's curing facility and then cleaning and returning empty buckets back to the restaurants and businesses. The shells that we collect become the base or substrate for the creation of oyster reefs throughout the Town's waterways to improve the overall water quality and health of our harbors and bays.

The Department of Maritime Services and the volunteers from REACH have collected over 700 buckets of shells from the Town's businesses over the past 12 months. We have collected enough shells to seed the Town's entire shell fishing and reef building program for this year. In fact, the Town of Huntington collects so many shells that we are now a net exporter of shells for the other Town's and municipalities on Long Island to allow them to start their own reef building programs to improve other waterways around the island.

One single oyster can filter approximately 50 gallons of water per day. The Town's reef systems are built with hundreds of thousands of oysters that we grow at Gold Star Beach and Woodbine Marina. In addition to filtering the waterways, the reefs create structure and habitat for a wide array of marine life.

Thank you to the REACH volunteers, the Department of Maritime Services, the participating restaurants and businesses, and most importantly the kitchen staff who take the time to separate and store the shells, the program would not be possible without the help of everyone.

Volunteers are always welcome to help our shell collection and reef building efforts, please reach out to the Department of Maritime Services for more information and ways to contribute.

In the meantime, the best way to help clean our waterways is to go out to a participating establishment and do your part by eating a plate of delicious oysters! Participating businesses include: Jeff's Seafood, Marty's Seafood, Prime, Rockin Fish, and Crossroads Grill.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!