



NYS Assemblyman Thiele Attends LILWA Meeting (February 12, 2004)



*Left to Right:
LILWA President., Judge Coleman,
NYS Assmblyman, Fred W. Thiele, Jr.,
Skip Norsic, LILWA Board Member (East End)*

Southampton, NY, - Feb. 12th, 2004__At the February board meeting of the Long Island Liquid Waste Association (LILWA), held in Southampton, NYS Assemblyman, Fred W. Thiele, Jr., (2nd Assembly District) listened as members expressed their concerns regarding the inadequate capacities of Long Island sewage treatment plants and their recent banning of solidified waste grease from those facilities. The ban now forces Long Island waste haulers and cesspool service companies to truck the banned material out of the state for disposal. LILWA is a trade organization made up of area cesspool cleaners, liquid waste haulers and related industries.

Having to haul the grease long distances to out of state plants is adding substantial costs to the cleaning of commercial grease traps which are components of the septic systems used by restaurants, hospitals, and other entities that have large food service facilities, and the additional expense is causing some to forego their regular maintenance. However, neglecting grease trap maintenance allows the system-clogging grease to build up and solidify, eventually causing the system to fail. When that happens, expensive emergency service becomes necessary. The high fees have even caused some businesses to seek out renegade companies who are willing to pump the grease out cheaply and then dump it, illegally, on Long Island, a practice that can have an adverse impact on groundwater, coastal areas and the environment in general.

The Assemblyman heard several committee reports calling for legislation aimed at stopping illegal dumping by requiring grease trap inspections and the institution of a system that would track grease trap material throughout the entire process, from the pump-out to the dump facility in much the same way hazardous materials are tracked.

Other reports concentrated on the need for a rational policy regarding the disposal of all sewage on Long Island. Our existing facilities can no longer handle the volume produced by the ever increasing population and the proliferation of new businesses. Recently, the facilities currently in service have been reaching their capacities early in the day and thus, closing their doors to additional dumping. The early closings leave trucks full of thousands of gallons of septic material having to wait until the next day to off-load their contents. In turn, with the trucks full, they are no longer available to help customers in need of service.

Mr. Thiele agreed with the LILWA members that there is a looming crisis and that the co-operation of government agencies, consumer and civic associations, environmental groups as well as those in the industry will be needed before there is any hope of solving the problem.