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CESSPOOL SWALLOWS SENIOR CITIZEN

Man Rescued In Deer Park Accident

It's happened again. An aging Long Island cesspool has collapsed, taking down another unsuspecting person who was merely walking across a lawn, completely unaware of the danger lurking beneath his feet.

This time, thankfully, there were other people in the area and the 71 year old victim was able to be rescued. Had there been no one there to witness the accident, the results would certainly have been a lot worse. The elderly gentleman, Edward Matos, was submerged up to his chest and in a matter of a very few minutes, could have succumbed to the noxious gasses present in active septic systems. Luckily, Mr. Matos, having suffered no major injuries, is alive and well, with nothing damaged except, maybe, his pride.

But collapsing cesspools are no laughing matter. In recent years, there have been many collapses, some resulting in serious injury and even death. This web site has been reporting on the problem since its inception in 2004, with no fewer than 5 articles on the subject ([Archives](#)) and LILWA president, Tom Gallagher, has pledged to make the issue a priority for this organization.

Clearly it is time that our state and local authorities begin to take the problem seriously and start to take action to reduce the threat that now exists - and as the stock of aging septic systems continues to get older - will only get worse.

The problem is primarily centered on cesspools built prior to 1976. Many of them were made of brick or cement blocks and due to certain additives in the mortar or in the materials used to cast the blocks themselves, have become compromised and too weak to withstand the pressure from years freezes and thaws, filling and draining and the even the weight of the soil in which they're buried. Add to that the people, equipment and vehicles which may travel over the cesspool and you have a prescription for disaster.

Watch this space for further information about this very serious problem.