

## Smithtown to plan day to collect hazardous waste

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| April 14, 2009

Smithtown plans to name a day in the fall when residents can recycle pollutants, town Supervisor Patrick Vecchio said Tuesday, after an environmental group presented a petition with more than 3,000 signatures asking for such a day.

Adrienne Esposito, executive director of [Citizens Campaign for the Environment](#), brought the petition as well as about 20 staffers to Tuesday's town board meeting to ask the town to start a version of the program known as Stop Throwing Out Pollutants. Esposito, who noted residents sent more than 1,500 letters to the town supporting the request, said Smithtown is the only town on Long Island without a STOP program.

STOP programs let residents bring hazardous waste such as batteries, pesticides and oil-based paints to town-run locations where they are collected and disposed of properly.

Vecchio said the town plans to hold a STOP day in October. However, he said the town will have to assess its success before it commits to a long-standing program.

The estimated cost to Smithtown for a one-day collection is \$20,000, said Russell Barnett, the town's environmental protection director, adding that about 50 percent will be reimbursed by the state.

Towns set up STOP programs according to their needs. Hempstead holds 10 STOP days a year and Brookhaven and Huntington have permanent collection facilities, Citizens Campaign officials said.

Barnett said Smithtown already collects old computers, printers, cell phones, antifreeze, batteries and fluorescent lightbulbs at its Municipal Services Facility on Old Northport Road. Barnett said the town does not presently collect pesticides and oil-based paints.

While canvassing neighborhoods in Smithtown, Citizens Campaign surveyors said they heard stories of residents disposing of pollutants by bringing them to work if they were employed in another township. Ninety-seven percent of residents said they would like a STOP program in Smithtown, and 57 percent say they are currently storing household hazardous waste in their homes, according to a Citizens Campaign survey.

While Esposito said she is happy the town will hold a STOP day in October, "the key is to do it each year," she said.

"We are anxious to work with you," she told the town board.