

## State DEC says it will clean up contamination near W. Islip schools

January 3, 2017 By Emily C. Dooley [emily.dooley@newsday.com](mailto:emily.dooley@newsday.com)



State environmental crews will begin removing contaminated sediment from culverts near Beach Street Middle School and West Islip High School next week as part of an investigation into contamination linked to the Dzus Fasteners site. (Credit: Johnny Milano)

State environmental crews next week will begin removing contaminated sediment and cleaning out culverts near two West Islip public schools bordering Willetts Creek that are downstream from a Superfund site.

Work is expected to begin Monday and focus on two walkways crossing Willetts Creek that lead to Beach Street Middle School and West Islip High School property.

The Department of Environmental Conservation will remove sediment from the culverts, which have sidewalks crossing over them, as well as five feet upstream and downstream.

The walkways from Burling and Edmore lanes will be open to students before and after school but closed during class hours. Work is expected to take less than a week at each location, DEC officials said.

A school district spokeswoman said members of the community had been notified about the cleanup at Willetts Creek.

"The district will continue to provide updates on the work being completed on district property as it is made available to the district, but at this point do not anticipate any disruption to the operations of the schools," she said in an emailed statement.

High levels of the carcinogen cadmium and chromium were discovered in soil samples taken last year on school grounds and private property as part of an investigation into contamination linked to the Dzus Fastener Co. site on Union Boulevard.

Fasteners and springs were made between 1932 and 2015, with oils, heavy metals and salts disposed into on-site leaching pools. The site had been part of a decades-long cleanup plan to remove soil and groundwater contamination, but the DEC said flooding from superstorm Sandy in 2012 likely stirred up additional compounds.

"DEC is committed to cleaning up the Dzus Fastener site to protect the public and the environment and we're taking action to make sure nearby students will not be disrupted during the cleanup," Commissioner Basil Seggos said in a news release.

The DEC is developing a remedial cleanup plan to address the Dzus contamination and the work near the schools was accelerated due to community concerns.

"We wanted to get in quickly and remove the contamination ahead of the broader remedial process that is underway," DEC spokesman Sean Mahar said.

Documents related to the site can be found at the West Islip Public Library, 3 Higbie Lane in West Islip.

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