January 2026

Interstate Environmental Commission

Working for Connecticut

About Us

The Interstate Environmental Commission (IEC) is a tri-state agency committed to protecting, conserving, and restoring Connecticut's environment, particularly in the area of water quality. One of IEC's most valuable resources is its independent, accredited environmental laboratory. IEC's laboratory primarily analyzes non-potable water samples collected throughout the tri-state area in conjunction with coordinated projects designed to support IEC's mission. The laboratory holds certification by the Connecticut Department of Public Health Environmental Laboratory Approval Program.

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How We Are Funded

According to the IEC's Tri-State Compact, each member state must appropriate funds to support the IEC. In the 2025 fiscal year, Connecticut contributed $3,333, or 0.11%, of IEC's total funding from its state fiscal year budget. While the majority of IEC's funding comes from federal grants, state appropriations are critical for IEC to meet the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 106 grant non-federal match requirement.

Education and Public Information

IEC participates in and welcomes opportunities to collaborate with educators, organizations, and the public to promote awareness of water quality issues and environmental stewardship. In 2025, IEC participated in two marine science festivals- SubMerge, coordinated by **Hudson River Park Trust**, and City of Water Day, coordinated by **Waterfront Alliance** and **New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program** (HEP). In addition, IEC hosted its third annual open house and welcomed tours to science professionals, artists, and partners. Staff presented posters at various water quality events throughout the year and participated in multiple conferences, including BioBAT's Currents of Change symposium and the annual HEP conference.

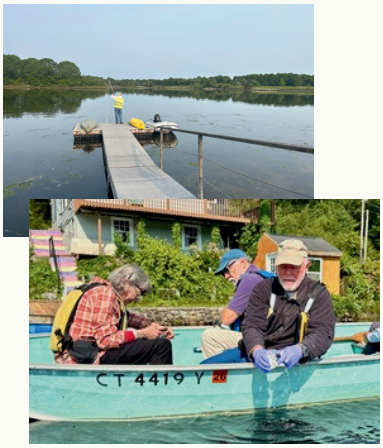
Partnerships

The goal of IEC's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to provide technical input and feedback to help evaluate IEC's water quality projects, build upon and strengthen regional partnerships, and pursue new sources of funding. IEC also actively participates in many stakeholder initiatives, workgroups, and committees to enhance communication and coordination of water quality efforts within the district, including the **Long Island Sound Partnership** (LISP) Management Committee, the LISP Science and Technical Advisory Committee, the LISP Water Quality Monitoring Workgroup, the Unified Water Study, and the LISP Pathogen Monitoring Network.

Short-Notice Sampling Response

IEC has the capability to perform short-notice inspections—sampling, monitoring, and analyses—in response to regional environmental emergencies, concerns, or natural disasters under an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). In 2025, in conjunction with the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation** (NYSDEC), IEC responded to a report of illegal dumping at a wastewater treatment facility by quickly conducting an inspection and collecting samples for analyses in order to ensure compliance and water safety. The ability to mobilize and perform sampling quickly at the request of local agencies makes IEC a valuable resource in times of need.

Long Island Sound Pathogen Monitoring Network



While long-term monitoring programs of the ecological health of the open waters and embayments of Long Island Sound are well-established, a data gap exists for pathogen indicators. In 2023, through funding provided by LISP, IEC piloted a Pathogen Monitoring Network, which coordinates pathogen monitoring across Long Island Sound embayments and tributaries. The network, developed in conjunction with NYSDEC and **Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection** (CTDEEP), recruits watershed-based groups to collect samples for pathogens, which are analyzed by a state-certified environmental laboratory. As of 2025, the program expanded in Connecticut to include one new group and two new waterbodies, with 9 groups and 17 waterbodies in total across NY and CT. The growth of this program allows for a better understanding of the presence of pathogen indicators in the Long Island Sound.

Compliance Monitoring

IEC has the ability to conduct inspections at industrial facilities and municipal water pollution control facilities at the request of CTDEEP. These inspections, planned in coordination with CTDEEP and federal authorities, include effluent sampling and an inspection of processes, equipment, plant records, and stormwater permits, and are conducted according to an EPA-approved QAPP. As of 2025, IEC's QAPP has been updated to improve these inspections. Samples collected at these facilities are analyzed to determine compliance with IEC's Water Quality Regulations and with each facility's specific NPDES and SPDES permits, where applicable. In 2015, EPA Region 1 agreed that, provided inspections are conducted in accordance with an established framework and meet certain minimum requirements to sufficiently ascertain compliance, the states can count IEC's inspections towards the goals outlined in their compliance monitoring strategy (CMS) with EPA. The Commission reports results of inspections to the facility, the appropriate state environmental departments, and EPA. IEC's inspections take place at facilities that discharge into the interstate district waters or sewer systems, ranging in location from Greenwich to New Haven.

Long Island Sound Monitoring

Since 1991, IEC has conducted water quality sampling surveys in support of the Long Island Sound Partnership. In 2025, LISP celebrated 40 years with a new name, a new logo, and a new Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), establishing "goals, objectives, and actions for the next 10 years to further restore and protect the Sound." IEC's participation in LIS monitoring contributes to this updated CCMP. Staff monitor dissolved oxygen (DO), as well as parameters that may influence DO, in the Connecticut/New York waters of the Long Island Sound, its embayments, and the Upper East River. Over the years, the scope of these surveys has expanded to include additional stations, year-round surveying, and added parameters to assess coastal acidification. IEC disseminates weekly survey summaries to stakeholders and produces a season summary with CTDEEP, which are available on our website.

Unified Water Study

Long Island Sound embayments are more prone to hypoxia and other impairments than open waters. With this in mind, the **Unified Water Study**, coordinated by **Save the Sound, Inc.**, aims to compare water quality within and among Long Island Sound embayments. IEC has been a partner in this effort since 2017, performing water quality monitoring of dissolved oxygen, salinity, temperature, turbidity, and macrophytes (algae) in Little Neck Bay and Manhasset Bay. Although these sites are in New York, they benefit the shared watershed of the Long Island Sound and contribute to a larger network of water quality in both NY and CT. Learn more about the results of this study at: www.savethesound.org/water-monitoring ecological-health.