



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
New York Water Science Center
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Peter,

Thank you for taking the time last week to discuss Shelter Island groundwater quality and potential options to build upon previous work done on the Island by the USGS New York Water Science Center. It was evident during our discussion that the protection and long-term sustainability of Shelter Island's sole source aquifer are vital concerns for the Shelter Island Water Advisory Committee (SIWAC). An important part of the USGS mission is to assess the quality of the Nation's drinking-water supply and advance unbiased knowledge of the natural and human factors that influence groundwater and surface-water quality. Previous work by the USGS done from 2016-2019 involved groundwater sampling to develop a baseline of current groundwater-quality conditions for Shelter Island. Groundwater samples were analyzed for a suite of contaminants to assess the presence of wastewater and related compounds (nutrients, pharmaceuticals and wastewater compounds).

As discussed, the SIWAC is interested in decadal studies to evaluate changes in baseline water quality and assess the effectiveness of water-quality improvement programs, with the second assessment to begin in 2026. The USGS NYWSC would be happy to assist with additional sampling to assess groundwater quality.

Here are some items for consideration and future discussion:

- Budget: We can tailor project objectives to meet the proposed budget. We do this through a series of discussions to ensure we would be collecting the right data to help answer specific questions.
- Analyte list: Nutrients, wastewater compounds and pharmaceuticals can be analyzed in any additional samples collected on the Island. Other constituents that the WAC may want to consider are pesticides, chloride, Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and 1,4-dioxane. Although these were not sampled for previously, these compounds have been detected in groundwater across Long Island.
- Deliverables: All data USGS collects is publicly available and accessible online in our database: [Water Data for the Nation](#). If you would like an interpretative product, such as a journal article or USGS Scientific Investigations Report (SIR), please let us know. These types of reports highlight interpreted data and the publication is citable.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

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