

## Bayonne students join Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission to clean up Newark Bay



*Students team up with Passaic Valley Sewerage Comm. to clean up Newark Bay*

*The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission once again partnered with Bayonne's Cleaner and Greener program. During two weeks in May, nearly 1,000 students from Bayonne school's spent some of their class time cleaning up neighborhood parks and beachfront. The students and crews cleaned up various areas around Newark Bay and removed enough garbage and debris to fill a 30-yard dumpster. (Photos courtesy of the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission)*

By Mike D'Onofrio | The Jersey Journal

on July 23, 2014 at 3:54 PM, updated July 23, 2014 at 3:56 PM

The Newark Bay just got a little cleaner.

The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission recently removed debris and other materials from the Newark Bay and its shoreline, including floatables, trees and two orange 55-gallon construction drums. The debris is from illegal dumping, pollution and storm activity.

PVSC once again partnered with Bayonne's Cleaner and Greener program, which was started by a Bayonne High School science teacher 20 years ago. This year's cleanup marked PVSC's 10th year of participation.

During two weeks in May, nearly 1,000 students from various Bayonne schools spent class periods cleaning up neighborhood parks and shoreline. Students from Woodrow Wilson, Washington Community, Horace Mann, Robinson, Lincoln Community, Midtown Community, Bailey, Mary J.

Donohoe and Henry Harris schools, participated. Bayonne High School students also lent a helping hand in the cleanup.

Crews cleaned up various areas around Newark Bay, including Rutkowski Park, Stephen Gregg Park, the Bayonne High School shoreline, Don Ahern Stadium, 16th Street Park, Robbins Reef Yacht Club and Dennis Collins Park.

The students removed enough garbage and debris to fill a 30-yard dumpster.

Michael DeFrancisci, executive director of PVSC, said the annual cleanup has a dual purpose: to provide an opportunity for the students to clean up their community's shoreline and to teach students about the importance of a clean environment.

"PVSC's partnership with school-based organizations such as Bayonne's K-12 system, demonstrate the good work that can be done to keep our waterways and shorelines clean," DeFrancisci said.

"I want to commend all the students and staff for giving back to the community and helping the environment," he added. "We look forward to continuing to provide assistance toward efforts to keep our waterways clean."

PVSC's award-winning River Restoration Program provided assistance to the Bayonne school students and staff by lending staff support and supervision, as well as gloves, bags, waders, rakes, and dumpsters, DeFrancisci said. PVSC staff also disposed of the waste collected.

Bayonne's Cleaner and Greener program runs twice a year: once for two weeks in the fall and then in the spring under PVSC's River Restoration program.

Since the program's inception, PVSC's River Restoration Program, which is charged with preserving and protecting over 100 miles of area waterways, has removed over 11,100 tons of debris from the Newark Bay, the Passaic River and its tributaries, and sponsored over 970 individual cleanups along shorelines and in various communities.

The cleanups are also accompanied by classroom lessons through PVSC Outreach Program.

The PVSC has embarked on an intensive, strategic cleanup campaign to free the Passaic River and related tributaries including the Hudson River and Newark Bay of blockages, help with flood control and maintain the quality of the River and waterways.

"PVSC relies on the dedicated volunteers, like these enterprising Bayonne school students and staff, to assist us with keeping our waterways clean, and I applaud them for their efforts," said PVSC Commissioner Kenneth J. Lucianin.