

Date: December 25, 2021

To: Eric Trott, Director of Planning and Development, Conservation Commission; Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee

From: John Elsesser, Town Manager

Subject: Watershed Health Pledge - Sustainable CT

As you all know, the Town of Coventry has earned itself a Silver Certification for Sustainable CT, a state funded program to promote certain actions that municipalities can take to boost their economies and environmental efficiency, arts and culture support and affordability in town.

The Town of Coventry is currently working towards our Sustainable CT re-certification. In an effort to not only earn more points towards maintaining the Silver Certification, the community will also benefit from a Watershed Health Pledge.


To educate and engage the community in watershed education, a Watershed Health Pledge will encourage residents and business owners to be water smart. The pledge signee will learn that clean rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and aquifers are necessary for health, recreation, and the survival of all creatures. The steps agreed upon by this pledge will help protect local water resources and will save time and money.

This Watershed Health Pledge asks community members to select a minimum of two commitments under two categories (1) maintaining lawn, gardens, and landscapes (2) maintaining other areas around the home.

Enclosed you will find the Watershed Health Pledge. Please take your time and review the pledge and let me know if this pledge is something the town would benefit from. In an effort to announce pledge results during July, Coventry Lake Month, I would appreciate input prior to May so we can push to get the pledge out this spring.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office at jelsesser@coventryct.org or (860) 742-6324.

Thank you,



John Elsesser
Town Manager
Town of Coventry



Watershed Health Pledge



I care about protecting the quality of water in our watersheds. I know that clean rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and aquifers are necessary for health, recreation, and the survival of all creatures.

I pledge to be Watershed Smart! I commit to taking as many of the following steps to protect our local water resources. I understand that by taking these steps it will not only protect the watershed, but will also save me time and money.

In maintaining my lawn, gardens, and landscape, I pledge to... (Please select a minimum of 2 commitments)

- nurture native trees, shrubs, and flowers around my **home**. I will limit lawn areas. I will plant or allow natural buffers to grow at the edges of streams and wetlands.
- mow my **lawn** property, following the rule of "mow high and let it lie." I will use the highest setting on the mower, not cut more than one third of the height of the grass, and allow the clippings to lie as mulch.
- water** my yard infrequently or not at all. I recognize that one inch of water a week is usually fine. I will not water when the sun is high or overnight. I will recognize that brown grass is dormant, not dead. It will return to life when rain comes.
- use **fertilizer** carefully or not at all. I will have the soil tested to determine that my yard needs. I will never apply phosphorus on an established lawn unless the soil is deficient. If necessary, I will use only a slow-release, low-concentration fertilizer or natural compost.
- abstain from using **pesticides** and **herbicides**. I will protect children, pets, birds, and butterflies from lawn-care toxins. I will only spot treat if necessary.
- create natural places for **water** to soak into the ground. I will use swales or rain gardens to manage stormwater. I will limit paved areas and will use pervious materials when possible for patios, driveways, and walkways.

In maintaining other areas around my home, I pledge to... (Please select a minimum of 2 commitment)

- have my **septic system** pumped out every two years.
- repair leaky faucets and toilets and purchase only water-efficient **appliances and fixtures**.
- use non-toxic **cleaners** and "green" building **materials** in my home.
- learn how to dispose of unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter **medications**.
- dispose of pet waste in the trash or a **pet-waste** processor (better).
- wash my **vehicles** in a carwash or on the grass, but not on my driveway.
- direct my roof runoff into drywells or other infiltration system if the surrounding soils are permeable, well-drained; and it meets Health Code requirements.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____