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NEIWPCC Staff Receive EPA Environmental Merit Awards

Lowell, Mass., April 22, 2014 – At the Environmental Merit Awards ceremony of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s New England branch (Region 1), two New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission staff members—Clair Ryan and Michael Jennings—received Environmental Merit Awards for their work on the [Northeast Voluntary Turf Fertilizer Initiative](#). The initiative resulted in the development of 33 guidelines to mitigate the impact of nutrients from lawn fertilizer on our region’s waterways. The guidelines, designed to be used by both professionals and the public, were published in January 2014.



EPA’s Erik Beck, who coordinated their nomination, commended Ryan and Jennings not only for the guidelines but also for the collaborative process they led, saying they “skillfully navigated a myriad of conflicting comments” to create the document. “In addition to hosting public meetings in three states,” Beck said, “the duo held numerous work meetings and calls, including meeting with fertilizer manufacturers. The final product, the [Regional Clean Water Guidelines for Fertilization of Urban Turf](#), is not only pragmatic but also sound environmental policy. This effort by Ryan and Jennings will reduce nutrients in fertilizer supplies coming into the region and ultimately will improve water quality.”

“It’s a great honor to receive this award,” Jennings said, “and we’re grateful for the support we received throughout the process. The guidelines are truly a reflection of the involvement of all the stakeholders.” Ryan added, “Completing the guidelines and now receiving this award has been very rewarding. At NEIWPCC, we’ll continue to do all we can to reduce nutrient runoff to the region’s lakes and streams.”

Since 1947, NEIWPCC has been a leader in the work for clean water. As a not-for-profit interstate agency, we serve and assist our member states—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont—in multiple ways including by developing resources that foster progress on water issues, training environmental professionals, coordinating scientific research, educating the public, and providing overall leadership in water management and protection.

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