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# BAY PARK BARRIER

18-foot wall to protect against another flood  
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Artist's rendering of  
project at East Rockaway  
treatment plant.

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# THE GREAT WALL OF BAY PARK

## 18-foot barrier going up to protect Nassau sewage plant against next big storm

BY ROBERT BRODSKY  
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Nassau County will begin building a massive concrete wall and earthen berm next month around the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant to protect the facility that serves more than a half-million residents from storm surges of up to 18 feet.

The \$37.2 million project is the county's most extensive effort ever to safeguard the East Rockaway plant, which was flooded during superstorm Sandy and was knocked out of service for 57 days.

More than 100 million gallons of raw sewage flowed into area waterways after Sandy hit on Oct. 29, 2012. In the 44 days it took to restore operations fully at Bay Park, another 2.2 billion gallons of partially treated sewage flowed out of the plant.

Sewer system pipes ruptured in Baldwin and East Rockaway, sending raw sewage into dozens of homes.

Michael Denicola, a vice president at Hazen & Sawyer, project manager for the sewer plant repairs, described the wall and berm as a "critical infrastructure

project" that will protect it from "a 500-year flood."

The 18-foot-high barrier will measure more than a mile in circumference and have markings indicating the 9-foot height of Sandy stormwaters at the plant, Denicola said.

"It will show the resiliency of the neighborhood and make sure we never forget," he said.

### \$830 million overhaul

The storm-hardening project is part of an \$830 million overhaul of the plant, the single largest post-Sandy project on Long Island. County officials say they expect the Federal Emergency Management Agency to reimburse 90 percent of the cost, with the remainder coming from the state and the county.

The Bay Park facility, which opened in 1950, covers 43 acres and serves 532,000 people on Nassau's South Shore.

Grace Industries of Plainview won the contract to strengthen the plant's defenses after submitting the lowest of eight bids. The company, which last year rebuilt the Long Beach boardwalk for \$44.2 million, is scheduled to begin work during the second

week of July; construction is expected to take up to two years.

Joe Bornschein, 38, an electrician who has lived near the plant since 2008, said he welcomed the improvements. The first floor of his home was flooded with 4 feet of water during Sandy, causing \$40,000 in damage and prompting him to elevate the house by 6 feet.

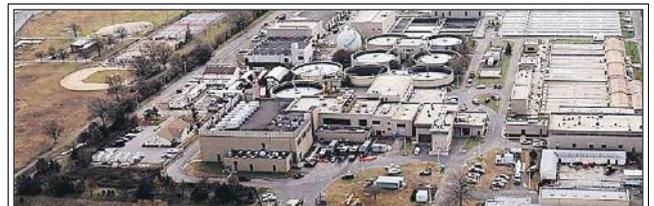
"The county is putting all this money into the plant to make sure this does not happen again," Bornschein said.

Kathy Schwarting, 62, a 25-year resident of nearby West Boulevard, said the project will be "transformative," increasing property values and potentially attracting new residents.

Schwarting said her house suffered \$130,000 in damage in Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. She had been back in the home for four months when Sandy struck, sending 5½ feet of water into her first floor and causing \$80,000 in damage.

"This is a very close-knit community, but the last three years have been very depressing," said Schwarting, a retired LIPA customer service manager. "Hopefully these changes

Nassau County has begun a project to fortify the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant against future superstorms. **Video:** [newsday.com/nassau](http://newsday.com/nassau)



### PROTECTING BAY PARK

Nassau County next month will begin a major project to safeguard the Bay Park Sewage Treatment plant from future storms:

- **Cost:** \$37.2 million to harden the plant exterior and improve surrounding parkland.
- **Height of concrete and earthen storm barrier:** 18 feet.
- **Circumference:** More than 1 mile.
- **Total cost of internal and exterior sewage treatment plant repairs:** \$830 million.
- **Funding sources:** 90 percent from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; remainder from New York State and Nassau County.

Source: Nassau County

will show people that this is a nice place to live again."

County Executive Edward Mangano has reached a deal to pay United Water, a New Jersey firm, \$57.4 million per year to operate and manage the county's three major sewage treatment plants, including Bay Park. County officials said the plan will save \$233 million over 20 years, mostly by transferring county workers to United's payroll.

### Other improvements

The hardening project also includes major improvements to Bay Park, a public park on the outskirts of the plant.

The county will replace and elevate two baseball and soccer fields, which because of

poor drainage are typically out of commission for at least two days after a storm, according to county officials. The county also will replace a pair of tennis and basketball courts, a dog run and an administrative building that has been closed since Sandy.

"Residents will benefit both from aesthetic improvements, some recreational improvements and the operation of the plant," Mangano said.

The county will also move a portion of Marjorie Lane that runs along East Rockaway Channel. Plans also call for a new walking path next to the channel.

Denicola said at the height of construction, 200 to 400 union laborers will be on the project.