

Political Notebook

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Candidates Talk Of Start Of New Laws In Effect On Oct. 1

At a time of intense partisanship in political circles, both state Rep. Cathy Tymniak (R-133) and state Sen. Judith Freedman (R-26) devised press releases to get their names out to the public and to provide a public service.

New state laws against underage drinking, Internet identity theft and a number of other issues take effect Oct. 1, they reported.

The legislative session ended in May and most laws adopted during the session become effective Oct. 1 to allow affected individuals and agencies some time to become accustomed to them.

For example, a new law imposes penalties for adults who allow teen drinking parties in their homes. And tougher penalties take effect for sending phony e-mails seeking people's financial information, while another new law protects news media and confidential news sources.

Furthermore, one new law regulates the use of open space land and another reduces nitrogen effluent into Long Island Sound.

Other new laws encourage lowering the flag to half staff to honor the military and another protects jobs and finances of national guard personnel who are called up to deal with state emergencies. Yet another redefines "emergency" and "major disaster" to help the state and localities obtain federal disaster relief funds.

In addition, the legislature adopted new legislation concerning health insurance coverage for breast cancer screening.

Meanwhile, a new law strengthens state regulation of amusement rides and another improves the confidentiality of telephone records.

Several new laws already are in effect, such as a sales tax exemption on home weatherization and energy saving products including programmable thermostats, window film, caulking, window and door strips, insulation, water heater blankets and a whole range of other heating products and systems. The products are exempt from the six percent state sales tax from June 1, 2006, to June 30, 2007.