



THE NEW YORK CITY  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**#45-17**

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UNVEILS NEW HIGH WATER MARK SIGN  
ON CONEY ISLAND TO PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT STORM SURGE  
RISK**

**October 26, 2017** – As New York City marks the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, the New York City Emergency Management Department in partnership with the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island unveiled a new high water mark sign in Coney Island, Brooklyn, to promote public awareness about the dangers of coastal storms. The new sign was unveiled at the Jewish Community Council.

The high water mark sign highlights that Hurricane Sandy brought a storm surge of six feet to the center, completely destroying the first floor main office including desks, computers, furniture, floors, and more. The High Water Mark Initiative is a community-based awareness program that increases local communities' awareness of flood risk. As part of the project, communities post high water mark signs in prominent places and conduct ongoing education and mitigation actions to build community resilience against future flooding.

“Hurricane Sandy devastated the Coney Island community five years ago, including the Jewish Community Center where we are standing today,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “This sign is here to remind everyone about the life-threatening storm surge we experienced when Hurricane Sandy hit and to urge New Yorkers to plan to keep your family safe should another storm hit.”

“The pain of the high water mark left by Superstorm Sandy’s storm surge has been turned into purpose by NYCEM Commissioner Esposito and his team, specifically into the purpose of a high water mark to further public awareness on future coastal flooding risks in Coney Island,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “I appreciate their continued commitment to community education on emergency matters that can make a big difference in the most critical hours.”

“Our community was dealt a hard blow during Superstorm Sandy, and for many families in our neighborhoods, the effects are still being felt,” said **NYS Assemblymember Pamela Harris**. “The high water marker is a symbol of what we struggled with and is a reminder that we must be



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prepared for flooding. I'm proud to support this initiative and will continue fighting to make sure everyone in our community gets back on their feet in the wake of Sandy's destruction."

"As we approach the 5th Anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, it is important we remember the significance of the event as we build toward a more resilient New York," **said NYS Senator Diane Savino**. "Having the mark at a location both devastated by the Storm, but also instrumental with helping the community rebuild is a testament to how close-knit and selfless the community of Coney Island is."

Even though the Atlantic hurricane season officially begins June 1 and runs through November 30, 84 percent of hurricanes form during peak hurricane season, from August through October. NYC Emergency Management plans and prepares year-round for coastal storms, and has a comprehensive Coastal Storm Plan that includes detailed procedures for evacuating and sheltering residents. In a major coastal storm, the City has the capacity to shelter up to 600,000 people with a shelter system that consists of 60 evacuation centers and more than 450 hurricane shelters, including special medical needs shelters. To supply and staff the shelter system, the City maintains an emergency stockpile of essential supplies and a database of City employees and volunteers who would be called upon to manage evacuation centers and emergency shelters. NYC Emergency Management also encourages New Yorkers to take steps to prepare for hurricanes:

**Know your zone:** New York City is divided into six hurricane evacuation zones – it is important to know whether you live in a zone. To find out what zone you live in, visit [www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone](http://www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone) or call 311.

**Make a plan:** Make a plan before a storm arrives to help keep you and your family safe. Each member of your family should have a Go bag – a collection of important supplies that you may need if you have to leave your home in a hurry. For more information on how to pack a Go bag, visit [here](#).

**Stay informed:** New Yorkers can stay informed about emergencies during hurricane season and throughout the year. To sign up for Notify NYC, New Yorkers can call 311, visit [NYC.gov/NotifyNYC](http://NYC.gov/NotifyNYC), or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter. Subscribers can receive alerts in seven ways: phone, email, SMS, fax, BlackBerry PIN, Instant Messenger, and Twitter. New Yorkers can also download the Notify NYC App for their smartphone. The Notify NYC mobile app is available for free download from iTunes or Google Play. Search for "Notify NYC."



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The High Water Mark Initiative is a community-based awareness program that increases local communities' awareness of flood risk. As part of the project, communities post high water mark signs in prominent places and conduct ongoing education and complete mitigation actions to build community resilience against future flooding. The high water mark sign on Coney Island reminds New Yorkers that on October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy brought a storm surge of six feet to the community center, destroying desks, computers, furniture, and equipment. The new sign is part of FEMA's pilot program for New York City and around the country and is one of many signs installed throughout the City. Other areas that have participated in the New York City initiative include: Midland Beach, Staten Island; MCU Park and Coney Island library, Brooklyn; South Street Seaport, Manhattan; Breezy Point, Rockaway Beach, and Hamilton Beach, Queens. To find out more about FEMA's High Water Mark Initiative, click [here](#).

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