



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 20, 2014

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

No. 450

**PHOTOS: CITY ACCELERATES UPGRADE OF PRIORITY UNDERGROUND
INFRASTRUCTURE; COORDINATES WORK WITH CONSOLIDATED EDISON AND NATIONAL
GRID**

*Work grows out of Underground Infrastructure Report released in June and de Blasio administration's
commitment of an additional \$300 million to speed the upgrade of aging City infrastructure*

*City and utilities have begun coordinated upgrades at four locations; dozens of additional locations under
consideration for similar replacements*

Photos of the work can be viewed on DEP's Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nycwater>

NEW YORK—The de Blasio administration today announced that coordinated work has begun to upgrade essential underground infrastructure at four locations around the city, with dozens of other locations currently under consideration for future work. In June, the administration released the Underground Infrastructure Report, which called for improving the way that street work is conducted by piloting coordinated investment in critical infrastructure by the City and private utilities, starting this summer.

The administration also committed an additional \$300 million to accelerate capital projects to upgrade the City's buried infrastructure, including water mains and sewers, this year. The Department of Environmental Protection, which operates a network of roughly 15,000 miles of water mains and sewers beneath city streets, and Consolidated Edison and National Grid, which operate more than 6,300 miles of gas mains and service lines, have collaborated to select locations throughout the city for the coordinated replacement of water, wastewater and gas infrastructure, particularly those areas with older cast iron pipes that have required repairs in the past.

“We are putting shovels in the ground to fix and upgrade some of the oldest infrastructure in the city. These investments will mean less frequent flooding in neighborhoods inundated whenever it rains. They'll mean more reliable utilities for residents and businesses. And they'll mean a safer city for all of us. The partnership we're putting into action today delivers on our promise to accelerate the work of rebuilding this city for the 21st Century,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“The nearly 15,000 miles of buried water mains and sewers throughout the five boroughs are the lifeblood of New York City,” said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. “Thanks to the additional funding from the Mayor, and coordinated work with our private utility partners, we are on pace to replace the oldest pipes over the next 10 years.”

“This is a smart approach to upgrading the city's complex underground infrastructure and puts public safety first,” said **Craig Ivey, President of Con Edison**. “We already plan to replace an average of 65 miles of

priority gas pipe in each of the next three years. Now, with the City speeding up infrastructure improvements, we will have even more opportunities to upgrade our gas system.”

“National Grid has been proactive in modernizing its natural gas infrastructure through our accelerated gas main replacement program,” said **Ken Daly, President, National-Grid New York**. “We work closely with New York City, other utilities and local agencies to coordinate our construction projects and we welcome this opportunity to further enhance the process to ensure the safety and reliability of the underground infrastructure.”

“This is a great example of the City and public utilities working together in a coordinated manner to address critical underground infrastructure priorities,” said **William H. Goldstein, Senior Advisor to the Mayor for Recovery Resiliency and Infrastructure**.

“It’s great to see progress being made in modernizing the city’s aging underground infrastructure. This is hugely important for New York’s future, and Mayor de Blasio deserves a lot of credit for committing an additional \$300 million to accelerate the replacement and rehabilitation of the city’s water and sewage infrastructure. Coordinating this work among National Grid, Con Edison and other private utility companies should increase the pace and reduce the cost of upgrading the city’s utility infrastructure,” said **Jonathan Bowles, Executive Director at the Center for an Urban Future**, which recently published *Caution Ahead*, a report about NYC’s aging infrastructure.

The first projects resulting from these new infrastructure partnerships are already in motion. In the St. Albans neighborhood of Queens, to help alleviate localized street flooding, DEP was planning to add new storm sewers to several blocks where none currently exist. While the roadway was opened to add the storm sewers, the existing cast iron water mains that were originally installed in 1923 would be replaced with new ductile iron mains and the sanitary sewer line, installed in 1931, would also be upgraded. Prior to beginning this work, DEP coordinated with National Grid, who maintains buried natural gas mains in this area of Queens. Earlier this summer, National Grid replaced their cast iron gas mains that were originally installed in 1939, and DEP has subsequently replaced the water mains and is in the process of upgrading the sewer service. Work is expected to be completed this fall.

In Lower Manhattan, DEP was planning to replace a 12-inch diameter cast iron water main along several blocks of Clarkson Street that was originally installed in 1923. Work was coordinated with Consolidated Edison, who is now in the process of replacing their cast iron gas main that was originally installed in 1897, along these same blocks as DEP completes the upgrades to the water infrastructure. In addition, crews are now mobilizing to begin similar coordinated upgrades in the Jackson Heights and Murray Hill neighborhoods of Queens.

Convened by Mayor de Blasio, the New York City Underground Infrastructure Working Group, which produced the report, will continue to meet internally and with private stakeholders that perform underground work to move forward on the recommendations included in the report and develop new recommendations to continue infrastructure improvements under the city’s streets. The Working Group includes the Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Design and Construction, Department of Buildings, Fire Department, the Economic Development Corporation, and the Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability.

The \$300 million in additional funding will build upon DEP’s budgeted capital program, which calls for more than \$2 billion for water main and sewer upgrades citywide over the next four years. The additional funding will help put DEP on pace to replace the highest risk water and sewer infrastructure over the next 10 years.

###