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Deputy Mayor Goldsmith and Environmental Protection Commissioner Holloway Launch Paperless Billing for Water Customers**Program Cuts Costs and Provides a Sustainable Alternative to Mailed Billing****Can Save the City \$850,000 Annually if Half of Water Ratepayers Sign Up**

Deputy Mayor for Operations Stephen Goldsmith and Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the launch of a paperless billing option for water and sewer bills. Water and sewer customers can now sign up to receive their quarterly bills electronically, instead of by mail. The new program will reduce printing and mailing costs, and offer an easy-to-use and sustainable way for the Department of Environmental Protection's 835,000 customers to stay current on their account. Mailed paper bills cost the City approximately \$2.04 per year, per customer for the paper, postage and overhead required to send bills via U.S. mail. Paperless billing costs the City a penny per year, per customer, saving the City roughly \$2.03 per year each time a customer signs up for paperless billing. If 10 percent of customers sign up for paperless billing, the City will save approximately \$170,000 per year. If 50 percent of customers sign up, the City will save approximately \$850,000. New Yorkers interested in taking advantage of this new service can sign up at www.nyc.gov.

"The paperless billing system will save money and enhance the customer experience," said Deputy Mayor Goldsmith. "We are encouraging all DEP customers to sign up – the more people that do, the more we can save and those savings get passed on to our customers. We are constantly looking for ways to implement programs to enhance customer convenience and to reduce costs for the City and the customer."

"Paperless billing is a customer service that's good for the environment and good for New Yorkers' pocketbooks," said Commissioner Holloway. "We've done the math: it costs approximately \$2 to mail a customer four paper bills during the year; when a customer goes paperless, that cost is essentially eliminated. Lower operating costs ultimately

MORE INFORMATION

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translate to lower water rate increases for our customers, and with paperless billing we're also saving trees and reducing our carbon footprint – important goals of Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC. I encourage all of our customers to sign up for paperless billing – the green, convenient and cost-effective way to pay your water bill."

Paperless billing is the latest in a number of recent customer service initiatives designed to give New Yorkers more information and more tools to make smart decisions about their water use:

- ▶ In July, the Department of Environmental Protection launched online water meter reading, a tool that allows homeowners and businesses to track their consumption online in real time. The system enables water customers to manage their water use to reduce water bills and detect leaks more quickly. To date, more than 500,000 wireless water meters have been installed across the city – 60 percent of all water and sewer customers. This puts the City ahead of schedule to connect all 835,000 customers by January 2012.
- ▶ Starting this summer, a two percent discount has been offered for customers who pay their water and sewer bills by direct debit. Direct debit offers an opportunity to pay by making scheduled payments, which can be drawn from a checking account, savings account, or credit card.
- ▶ Department of Environmental Protection Call Center wait times are down from an average of four minutes and 24 seconds in 2006 to an average of 54 seconds in 2010 in part due to extended hours of operations, additional call takers and supervisory staff, and improved computer systems.

The Department of Environmental Protection manages the city's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov.

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