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Six New York City Universities Work to Reduce Water Use

Participating Schools Will Join Hospitals, Restaurants, and Hotels in the New York City Water Challenge

In Addition to Fixture Retrofits, Universities Will Initiate Student Water Conservation Campaigns

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Vincent Sapienza today announced the launch of the New York City Water Challenge to Universities. This is the fourth of New York City's sector specific Challenges and builds off the success of previous Challenges to hotels, restaurants and hospitals. As part of the Challenge, the six participating universities will work to reduce their campus-wide average water consumption by 5 percent, which would be a savings of approximately 1.3 million gallons of water per month. DEP will host workshops to help the universities identify appropriate strategies for water conservation, including water auditing, upgrading domestic use water fixtures, and smart metering. In addition to fixture retrofits, the universities will also be initiating student water conservation campaigns. The challenge will last two years and conclude in August 2020. The participating universities are Fordham University, Long Island University: Brooklyn Campus, Pace University, St. John's University, The New School, and Weill Cornell Medical. New York City is home to more university students than anywhere in the country. The lessons learned from the New York City Water Challenge to Universities will be utilized by DEP to develop a best practices guide for water management in higher education buildings.

"These six universities are helping DEP to conserve one of our city's most precious resources, our world renowned drinking water supply, by targeting ways to reduce their campus' water consumption and promoting water conservation among their faculty and students," said **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. "I thank these schools for participating in the New York City Water Challenge and for making a commitment to become more sustainable members of our community."

"The human family is increasingly becoming aware of the limits of our planet, including its supply of fresh water," said **Joseph M. McShane, S.J., president of Fordham University**. "We are called to be good stewards of our water supply (and all natural resources) not merely for the good of our fellow New Yorkers, nor the entire population of the globe, but for all living things. Fordham is proud to be a part of this effort."

"Long Island University is proud to partner with Department of Environmental Protection as a participant in the New York City Water Challenge to Universities," said **LIU President Dr. Kimberly R. Cline**. "We are actively exploring innovative ways to reduce water use at Long Island University and developing engaging awareness campaigns to educate our student body on the importance of water conservation."

"Pace University is committed to sustainability and proud to be a participant in the

More Information

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<div><div>» <a href="#">Capital Projects</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Careers at DEP</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Environmental Reviews</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Interagency MOUs</a></div><div>» <a href="#">A to Z Index</a></div><div>» <a href="#">Contact Us</a></div></div>	<p>New York City Water Challenge,” said <b>Pace President Marvin Krislov</b>. “From the world-renowned environmental law program at our Elisabeth Haub School of Law to the work we do in New York Harbor with the Billion Oyster Project, we’re educating future environmental leaders. We’re pleased to support the New York City Department of Environmental Protection as it develops best practices for water management.”</p> <p>“The earth is our common home and water is a most precious resource,” said <b>St. John’s University President Conrado “Bobby” Gempesaw</b>. “At St. John’s, environmental awareness and sustainability is an interdisciplinary mission and we are proud to join in the New York City Water Challenge to Universities and work to reduce water use.”</p> <p>“The New School has a strong commitment to sustainability, and we are proud to join with the DEP and universities, restaurants, and hospitals across New York City to reduce water use,” said <b>New School President David Van Zandt</b>. “With our formidable talents in design and the social sciences, we look forward to working with the DEP and members of our university community to conserve one the city’s most valued resources: our drinking water.”</p> <p>“Weill Cornell Medicine is committed to sustainability and we are proud to support this vital environmental initiative,” said <b>Dr. Augustine M.K. Choi, the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medicine</b>. “We look forward to working with our faculty, students and staff on innovative ways to reduce our water consumption, helping to ensure a safe and reliable water supply for future generations of doctors, patients and all New Yorkers.”</p> <p>To see updates from these schools and their students as they save water during the Challenge, follow <a href="#">@nycwater</a> and <a href="#">#nycwaterchallenge</a>.</p> <p>Encouraging water-usage reductions in universities is just one part of DEP’s efforts to conserve water as part of a \$1.5 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for more than nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. DEP is working to reduce citywide water consumption by five percent prior to the approximately 6-month shutdown of the leaking Delaware Aqueduct, which conveys roughly half of the city’s drinking water, in October 2022. The <a href="#">\$1 billion project</a> will repair two areas of leakage within the 85-mile Delaware Aqueduct, the longest tunnel in the world. The primary leak will be eliminated through the construction of a 2.5-mile bypass tunnel, which will be drilled 600 feet below the Hudson River from Newburgh to Wappinger.</p> <p>In preparation for the shutdown, DEP has partnered with private property owners including businesses, hotels, restaurants and hospitals, and has developed a combination of conservation programs, such as the Toilet Replacement Program, Leak Notification Program, and Water Reuse Grant Pilot Program, to ensure an uninterrupted supply of water. DEP’s Municipal Water Efficiency Program identifies opportunities to conserve water at City-owned properties and facilities. As part of this program, DEP has already completed a partnership with NYC Parks to install activation buttons on spray showers at 400 playgrounds around the City that are saving 1.1 million gallons of water a day. More than 40,000 bathroom fixtures in 400 public school buildings were also being updated which will conserve approximately 4 million gallons of water each school day. To learn more about New York City’s Water Demand Management Program, visit DEP’s <a href="#">interactive online map</a> highlighting the completed demand management projects across the city and DEP’s <a href="#">2018 Water Demand Management Plan</a>.</p> <p>As a result of multiple sustained water conservation programs, overall water use in the city has declined from over 1.5 billion gallons a day in 1980 to roughly 1 billion gallons a day at present, while the City’s population grew from just over 7.1 million to 8.6 million in the same period.</p> <p>DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.6 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes.</p>
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Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$19.4 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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