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DEP Resumes Shutdown of Shandaken Tunnel for Upgrade Work at Schoharie Reservoir Intake



Improved outlook for rainfall and runoff allows planned construction work to resume

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that it will shut down the Shandaken Tunnel on Monday, April 15, to resume construction work at the intake chamber at Schoharie Reservoir. The tunnel will be out of service until May 13 while divers continue the installation of a plug and bypass system that will allow them to safely replace gates that control the flow of water into the tunnel. The 18-mile-long Shandaken Tunnel conveys water from Schoharie Reservoir to the Esopus Creek and Ashokan Reservoir.

The timing and duration of shutdowns for the Shandaken Tunnel are planned in close coordination with experts from the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Because the tunnel supplements the natural flow of water in the Esopus Creek, the shutdowns are planned to coincide with the period of spring rains and melting snow that have historically provided the greatest quantity of natural flow within the creek. During each shutdown, DEP and DEC hold weekly meetings to review the current and forecasted flow of water in the creek.

DEP had begun this year's work on March 4 but temporarily suspended the work on March 26 because unusually dry conditions caused the natural flow in the Esopus Creek to drop below a desired threshold. This week, engineers and scientists from DEP and DEC agreed to resume the shutdown because runoff conditions and forecasts substantially improved. The shutdown that begins Monday will continue for the full four-week duration because it includes drilling and other work at the intake chamber that cannot be stopped once it begins.

When the shutdown resumes on Monday, divers and other laborers will continue

More Information

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their work on the [\\$47 million rehabilitation of the Shandaken Tunnel Intake Chamber](#). Divers have already installed a massive plug within the intake structure. This plug will prevent the divers from getting pulled into the tunnel while they replace the eight flow-control gates. Over the next four weeks, divers will install a bypass pipe through the middle of that plug. The bypass pipe will safely convey up to 100 million gallon of water each day through the plug while the divers work on the gates.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of high-quality water each day to more than 9.6 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$168.9 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with \$19.7 billion in investments planned over the next decade that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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