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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
ANNOUNCES NYC WATER WINS REGIONAL TASTE TEST
COMPETITION**

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that the City's tap water was awarded the top prize in New York State's Regional Tap Water Taste Test competition. The contest was held yesterday at the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan and pitted New York City's tap water against drinking water suppliers from Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. More than 80 museum visitors sampled tap water from the four suppliers and ranked them by taste. New York City's tap water was judged to be the best tasting, followed by water from Mount Vernon in Westchester, West Hempstead in Nassau County, and tap water supplied by the Suffolk County Water Authority. After winning the Regional Taste Test competition, New York City tap water will next compete in a state-wide contest to be held in Syracuse, N.Y. on Aug. 29. The annual taste test competition which takes place in county, regional, and state-wide contests is organized by the New York State Department of Health and sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Generations ago New Yorkers had the foresight to construct the incredible network of infrastructure that carries our water from as far away as 125 miles and provides us with a robust supply of drinking water from a pristine and protected watershed," said Commissioner Strickland. "Under Mayor Bloomberg's leadership we have continued that tradition, investing billions of dollars in upgrades to our water supply system and watershed protection programs, to ensure that the next generation of New Yorkers continues to enjoy high quality drinking water."

New York City's tap water is internationally renowned for its quality. New York is one of only five large cities in the country permitted to run a largely unfiltered drinking water supply, due in large part to the City's comprehensive watershed protection programs. The City has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs since 1993, when the Environmental Protection Agency first issued the City a waiver from the federal requirement to filter the water from the Catskill/Delaware System. Earlier this year, DEP was the recipient of the 2013 "Exemplary Source Water Protection Award" from the American Water Works Association (AWWA). The award for metropolitan-size systems recognizes organizations that protect drinking water at its source by setting ambitious goals and implementing programs that are effective and innovative.

DEP performs more than 1,000 daily tests of the city's drinking water taken from nearly 1,000 sampling locations throughout the five boroughs. This is in addition to the 225,000 tests performed annually throughout the watershed. Each year, DEP publishes a Water Supply and

Quality Report with detailed information about the water supply and the quality of the City's drinking water. To view the report click [here](#).

NYC Water is a healthy alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages, containing zero calories, zero sugar, and zero fat. A typical 16-ounce bottle of soda contains about 180 calories and 20 cubes of sugar. Sports drinks, marketed as healthy alternatives, have as many calories as sugary beverages and usually contain high levels of sodium. NYC Water is also affordable—at roughly one penny per gallon, it is approximately 1,000 times less expensive than bottled water. In addition, NYC Water helps promote the efforts of PlaNYC, Mayor Bloomberg's sustainability blueprint for the city; production of plastic water bottles for use in the United States uses 1.5 million barrels of oil a year—enough to power 250,000 homes or 100,000 cars all year.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight 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. 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 \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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