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DEP Reaches Key Construction Milestone in Upgrade of Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant

\$5 Billion Total Plant Upgrade Enhances Ability to Treat Wastewater When It Rains

Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that the south battery of the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant is now operational, completing a crucial step toward enhancing the plant's wet weather treatment capacity. As part of an overall \$5 billion upgrade, the work was performed by Skanska and is part of the effort to increase the plant's treatment capacity from 620 to 700 million gallons per day of combined wastewater and stormwater flow when it rains. The plant contains three batteries, or tanks, that perform secondary treatment of wastewater, a biological process using naturally-occurring bacteria to break down pathogens as wastewater passes through aeration and sediment tanks. Last May, DEP certified that the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant is meeting the secondary treatment standards of the Clean Water Act—which requires wastewater to be treated to remove at least 85% of certain pollutants before post-treated water, known as effluent, is discharged into surrounding waterways—two years ahead of schedule.

“Mayor Bloomberg has invested billions of dollars to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act, a landmark piece of legislation that has contributed to New York Harbor being the cleanest it has been in 100 years of testing,” said Commissioner Strickland. “Last year we experienced record rainfall, and we must continue to work toward ensuring that our wastewater treatment plants are capable of handling normal rain storms. Our commitment has already led to achieving Clean Water Act compliance at Newtown Creek two years ahead of schedule, and completing the south battery at Newtown Creek will dramatically improve our ability to meet future challenges.”

DEP began the plant's secondary treatment upgrade in 2000 as part of a Consent Judgment with the State of New York, and the completion of the south battery marks a key step toward meeting the requirements of that agreement. The Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, located in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, serves approximately one million residents within a 15,000 acre drainage area and a capacity to treat 310 million gallons of sewage per day on a dry day. For the last 40 years, the City has raised its treatment capacity and increased the amount of pathogens that are removed through the treatment process, which treats 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater a day during dry weather and double that amount when it rains. The city's wastewater treatment plants are equipped to handle up to 3.6 billion gallons per day during wet weather. There is roughly \$550 million in remaining design, construction and support contracts to be completed at the plant. The full plant upgrade will be completed in 2014.

The south battery of the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant consists of eight grit tanks, four aeration tanks, and eight sedimentation tanks, all of which are hydraulically

separated and contain covered weirs for odor control. The battery upgrade remodeled the existing grit, aeration, and sedimentation tanks that perform the secondary wastewater treatment process. Wastewater treatment includes physical, chemical, and biological processes that remove at least 85% of pollutants and produce well-treated, high-quality effluent which is then released into the city's surrounding waterways. After preliminary physical treatment, wastewater passes through the batteries' aeration tanks where a combination of sludge and air mixes with the wastewater to stimulate the growth of aerobic organisms, which break down organic pollutants through naturally-occurring biological processes. The aerated wastewater then flows to settling tanks to allow solid material to sink to the bottom as secondary sludge. From there, the wastewater flows to a disinfection tank before the treated effluent, meeting applicable standards, is discharged into the East River at India Street.

DEP manages the 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 7,400 miles of sewer lines and 95 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP employs nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$13.2 billion in investments over the next 10 years that creates up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

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