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Schoharie Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

03-07a

February 12, 2003

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**MORE INFORMATION**

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**NYC DEP Issues Advisory To Homeowners To Beware Of Imposters Posing As "Water Department" Employees**

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has learned that individuals have been visiting homes in areas of Southeast Queens and asking to take water samples for testing.

"Complainants from Cambria Heights, Rosedale, Hollis, Jamaica, St. Albans and Queens Village have reported that the individuals identified themselves as being from DEP or the water department," said DEP Commissioner Christopher O. Ward. "These people are not employees of DEP or its contractors. Accordingly, we have outlined precautions that citizens should take to protect themselves from imposters who claim they need to inspect water quality, water meters or plumbing equipment."

DEP employees who are authorized to enter homes must carry and show photo I.D. cards and badges. Since imposters or others seeking access may have some form of identification, it is important to make sure that the I.D. card is from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

**IMPORTANT FACTS FOR HOMEOWNERS**

- ▶ Most water meters are read remotely from outside the home. DEP water use inspectors, however, may seek access without appointments for certain assignments, such as meter reading (if there is no remote or it does not work) and inspecting installations or repairs performed by DEP contractors.
- ▶ DEP water use inspectors wear uniforms and carry photo I.D. cards. Con Edison workers, who read water meters for DEP in all five boroughs, also wear uniforms and carry identification.
- ▶ Contractors installing water meters usually, but not always, make appointments in advance, wear uniforms, carry photo I.D cards, and drive trucks bearing company

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identification.

- ▶ DEP air and noise inspectors and water quality investigators do not wear uniforms, but they must carry and present photo I.D. cards and DEP inspector badges. When doing tests in buildings and homes at the request of citizens, they normally make appointments in advance.
- ▶ DEP employees who respond to emergency situations, such as hazardous material spills or leaks in water and sewer systems may need to gain access to buildings or homes to determine the source of a leak. They do not wear uniforms, but must carry and present photo I.D. cards whenever requesting access to a residence or building.
- ▶ No DEP employee is ever authorized to ask for cash money to perform any service or for payment of past due bills.

IF CITIZENS BELIEVE THAT PERSONS ARE MISREPRESENTING THEMSELVES AS DEP EMPLOYEES, THEY SHOULD PHONE THE LOCAL POLICE PRECINCT AND THE DEP HELP CENTER AT 718-DEP-HELP (718-337-4357).