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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MORE INFORMATION

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DEP Will Hold CustomerR Service Outreach For Water And Sewer Account Holders In Washington Heights

As part of its commitment to improve its customer service practices and ensure that water and sewer customers receive the help they need to manage their accounts, DEP will hold a series of public outreach sessions staffed by customer service representatives. Council Member Miguel Martinez will host a March 8 outreach program in Washington Heights. Consumers will have an opportunity to conveniently obtain information and assistance about their water and sewer bills.

Date:	Thursday, March 8, 2007
Time:	6:30 – 8:30 pm
Location:	Washington Heights Isabella Geriatric Center 515 Audubon Avenue at 190th Street, Manhattan (Wheelchair Accessible) Take No. 1 train to 191st Street

Commissioner Lloyd, said, “We are committed to improving our customer service operations to ensure account holders can quickly and efficiently contact the agency to obtain information about their bills. We have reduced waiting time at our call center from 6 minutes to 40 seconds; and expanded our call center hours to include Saturdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and until 8:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We are currently setting up outreach meetings throughout the City where DEP customer service staff will be on hand to provide help with any questions or concerns about water bills including water usage, water meters, and also set up payment agreements. I want to thank Council Member Martinez for setting up this meeting in support of our outreach efforts.”

DEP is also working with other City agencies that offer programs of interest to property owners. Staff members from the Departments of Finance, Aging and Housing Preservation and Development will attend the meetings to assist with questions and problems relating to their own programs.

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For further information about future outreach events or to learn about New York City's water supply system call 311 or visit the DEP website at www.nyc.gov/dep.

ABOUT DEP

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The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) protects the environmental health, welfare and natural resources of the City and its residents. The Department manages the City's water supply, serving more than half the population of New York State with over one billion gallons of quality drinking water daily. Nineteen reservoirs provide water to eight million City residents through a network grid of over 6,200 miles of water mains throughout the five boroughs as well as an additional one million consumers in four upstate counties. DEP manages 14 in-City wastewater treatment plans, and an additional nine treatment plants upstate. DEP carries out federal Clean Water Act rules and regulations, handles hazardous materials emergencies and toxic site remediation, oversees asbestos monitoring and removal, enforces the City's air and noise codes, bills and collects on City water and sewer accounts, provides educational materials and resources to City schools, and manages City-wide water conservation programs.

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