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Departments of Environmental Protection, Parks and Recreation Install Timers on Spray Showers in City Playgrounds to Conserve Water

400 Playground Sprinklers Citywide to be Equipped with Timers and Activation Buttons;

Retrofits Part of Citywide Effort to Reduce Water Consumption by 5%

Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland and Parks and Recreation (DPR) Commissioner Adrian Benepe today announced the installation of timers on spray showers at City playgrounds to reduce water consumption by ensuring the showers are activated only when in use. The retrofits equip the showers with activation buttons in addition to two-minute automatic shut-off timers. If still in use, the new buttons will reactivate the spray shower for an additional two minutes. The retrofits will ensure that water is used by playground showers only while the fixtures are in use, aiding the citywide effort to reduce water consumption by 5% as part of the Water for the Future program. The timers were installed as a pilot at Maple and Glendale playgrounds in Queens, and represent the first of 400 citywide retrofits scheduled for completion by 2017. Reducing water use by playground showers also creates extra capacity in local sewer systems, which will help prevent flooding during heavy rain and ease pressure on the city's wastewater treatment plants. The timed spray showers were developed through the Municipal Water Efficiency Program, an interagency partnership to implement water conservation strategies at City-owned properties and facilities, and are being funded by DEP.

"NYC Water is one of the city's most precious resources, and it's important that we conserve it wherever we can while also enhancing opportunities for New Yorkers to enjoy water outdoors," said Commissioner Strickland. "By retrofitting spray showers at playgrounds throughout the five boroughs we will improve sewer capacity and reduce waste."

"The Parks Department is pleased to partner with DEP to promote sustainability through green infrastructure and water conservation," said Commissioner Benepe. "The installation of timers at spray showers across New York City will conserve water and reduce the amount of runoff that enters our sewers, helping to prevent sewer overflows and water pollution during heavy rains."

Timed playground spray showers are the result of significant interagency cooperation to conserve water during high demand summer months by ensuring that the showers are activated only while in use. Without timers and reactivation buttons, playground showers use approximately 7,000 gallons of water per day. Timers will reduce that consumption by 80%, or

approximately 5,600 gallons per day. Following the current pilot phase, 23 spray showers will be installed at City playgrounds by next summer, with 400 installations scheduled for completion by 2017. The spray showers are projected to reduce citywide water consumption by 1.5 million gallons per day.

New York City's effort to reduce water consumption by 5% citywide is a significant component of the Water for the Future program, a \$2.1 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. The program has two main elements: repairing leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct—which supplies roughly half of the city's daily drinking water needs—and supplementing the city's water supply during the temporary shutdown of the aqueduct. In November 2010, DEP outlined a design and timeline to address leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct which will require the temporary shutdown of the tunnel between 2020 and 2021. In 2011, DEP developed water demand strategies to reduce consumption by 5% during the period leading up to the temporary shutdown of the Delaware Aqueduct. Through interagency outreach and analysis, the City developed the Municipal Water Efficiency Program, identifying opportunities to conserve water at City-owned properties and facilities. The cost-effective partnership between DEP and DPR to install playground spray shower retrofits will cost approximately \$6 million over seven years.

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 nearly 1,000 in the upstate watershed. 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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