



Town of Neversink

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND TOWN OF
NEVERSINK ANNOUNCE PLANS TO REPLACE BASEBALL FIELDS
DESTROYED BY HURRICANE IRENE**

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Town of Neversink today announced an agreement that will support the town in building four new baseball fields along Route 42 to replace fields destroyed by Hurricane Irene in 2011. The collaboration will also ensure the continued protection of water quality in Rondout Reservoir. The new ball fields, on Route 42 across from the intersection with Big Hollow Road, will replace the town's former Little League complex along Route 55A that was destroyed during Hurricane Irene.

The Town of Neversink secured the roughly 16-acre parcel on Monday. The land is part of an 88 acre parcel purchased by DEP in 2012 as part of the department's continued effort to protect the land around New York City's drinking water supply. DEP and Neversink reached an agreement that led to the property being subdivided, allowing the town to purchase 16 of the 88 acres to replace the ball fields adjacent to the Rondout Creek that it lost during Irene. The agreement calls for the property to be held as parkland – a provision that will ensure open space and recreational facilities for town residents and water-quality protection for customers of the City's water supply.

"Upstate communities, including the more than 1,000 DEP employees who live outside the five boroughs, protect a network of reservoirs that help make New York City our country's most vibrant metropolis," DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland said. "It is a privilege to work with the Town of Neversink, and specifically Supervisor McCarthy, to get these ball fields built. Nothing would make us prouder than if the next Yankees shortstop came from the town of Neversink."

"The town has looked far and wide for a place to build new ball fields, but there were practically no options available to us," Town of Neversink Supervisor Mark McCarthy said. "New York City could not have been more accommodating when we approached them with this idea. Because of our partnership with DEP, more than 300 young people from Neversink will now have a place to play baseball and softball."

Neversink purchased the 16-acre property for \$192,000. The town is aiming to have at least some of the ball fields built by 2014. The vast majority of its costs will be covered by more than \$500,000 it received from federal and state emergency funds after Hurricane Irene.

Neversink leased its four ball fields on Route 55A from the City for many years. All but one of the fields were destroyed beyond repair when Hurricane Irene swelled the Rondout Creek, which runs alongside the fields. The creek ran so high and fast that it eroded its banks and took one of the fields almost completely with it. Fences were knocked down, and dugouts and scorekeeper booths were washed away.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.3 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam, and Westchester counties. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP employs nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and others professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$68 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with over \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. 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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