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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Environmental Protections Issues Water Pressure Warning

Urges That Fire Hydrants Remain Closed

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection issued a water pressure warning this morning after pressure dropped in neighborhoods in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. Commissioner Ward blamed illegally opened fire hydrants and urged New Yorkers to observe water use regulations.

“Hydrants are for fighting fires, and should be used responsibly,” said Commissioner Ward. “Illegally opened hydrants can lower water pressure, causing problems at hospitals and other medical care facilities, and hindering fire-fighting by reducing the flow of water to hoses and pumps. Also, children can be at serious risk, because the powerful force of a open hydrant without a spray cap can push them into oncoming traffic.”

Low water pressure was noted this morning in Manhattan in Washington Heights and Inwood, in Brooklyn in East New York, and in Queens in South Jamaica and Richmond Hill.

The penalty for opening a hydrant without a spray cap is \$500. To report illegally opened hydrants or other water or sewer complaints, call the City’s 24-hour help line at 311.

Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap. One illegally opened hydrant wastes up to 1,000 gallons of water per minute, while a hydrant with a spray cap only puts out around 25 gallons per minute. Spray caps can be obtained by an adult 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses.