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Contact:

depressoffice@dep.nyc.gov, (718) 595-6600

New York City Hospitals Join Citywide Challenge to Reduce Water Use



Hospitals Join New York City Restaurants, Hotels, Public Schools, Parks and Private Residences in Conservation Program Aimed at Ensuring Adequate Water Supply for Growing Population

[Photos of the Participating Hospitals are Available on DEP's Flickr Page](#)

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd today announced that three of New York City's hospitals have joined the New York City Water Challenge to Hospitals. Each hospital will work to reduce their campus-wide monthly average water consumption by 5 percent and thereby save approximately 2.2 million gallons of water per month. Participating hospitals include: NewYork-Presbyterian/Queens, Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK), and NYC Health + Hospitals/Harlem. The participants represent a mix of public and private hospitals that provide inpatient care, teaching and research services. The lessons learned from the New York City Water Challenge to Hospitals will be utilized by DEP to develop a best practices guide for water management in all area hospitals.

"People travel from all over the world to receive care at New York City hospitals and we are proud to partner with them to help conserve our similarly world-famous drinking water supply," said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. "These hospitals are big facilities that require a significant amount of water for the critical services they provide and we hope the lessons learned through this challenge will be replicated across the city."

"NYC Health + Hospitals welcomes the opportunity to join innovative

More Information

NYC Department of Environmental Protection
Public Affairs
59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373
(718) 595-6600

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collaborations, such as this one, to improve efficiencies throughout our vast public health care system,” said **NYC Health + Hospitals President Dr. Ram Raju**. “We thank DEP for taking the lead on this important project and hope this program can eventually be expanded on a larger scale to complement our current energy efficiency projects.”

“Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center is pleased to announce our participation in the New York City Water Challenge in partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection,” said **John Letson, Vice President of Plant Operations at MSK**. “We are committed to sustainable practices that will conserve water and ensure a healthy water supply for our staff, our patients, the community and future generations. Our New York City buildings will be participating in the challenge, with an intention to share best practices amongst all of our sites and others in the healthcare community.”

“We are proud and excited to be asked to join the NYC Water Challenge to Hospitals,” said **Stephen S. Mills, President of NewYork-Presbyterian/Queens**. “Here at NYP/Queens, we have been making tremendous strides to incorporate sustainability throughout the hospital. We look forward to being trailblazers for hospitals in water conservation efforts, especially those aligned with DEP’s goals within this challenge.”

Participating hospitals are equipped with water meters and Automated Meter Reading devices which track water consumption in near real time. The hospitals will use 24 months of water consumption data to establish a baseline profile and track their progress in reducing water consumption and the City will develop a toolkit of resources to help them meet their targets efficiently. Water reduction strategies may include good housekeeping techniques, such as finding and repairing leaks quickly, and developing literature that encourages staff members to practice water conserving behavior. Physical upgrades will also be explored, such as the replacement of inefficient plumbing fixtures and the adoption of new technologies that use water minimally, or reuse it to the extent possible.

The NYC Water Challenge to Hospitals is one part of DEP’s efforts to conserve water as part of a \$1.5 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for more than nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. As part of this initiative, DEP is working to repair leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct that supplies roughly half of the city’s daily drinking water. In order to complete these repairs to the Aqueduct, the tunnel must be temporarily shut down between 2022 and 2023.

In preparation for the shutdown, DEP has developed a combination of conservation programs and supplemental supplies that will ensure an uninterrupted supply of water. The Municipal Water Efficiency Program identifies opportunities to conserve water at City-owned properties and facilities. As part of this program, DEP has already begun a partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to install activation buttons on spray showers at 400 playgrounds around the city that will save 1.5 million gallons of water a day. More than 40,000 bathroom fixtures in 500 public school buildings are also being updated. These retrofits will conserve approximately 4 million gallons of water each school day.

DEP has also introduced Guide’s to Water Efficiency for [Restaurants](#) and [Hotels](#). They contain water conservation advice in topic areas ranging from low-cost retrofits and equipment replacement to staff education. The guides are a result of lessons learned during earlier water conservation challenges to the city’s restaurants and hotels and are distributed throughout the five boroughs in an effort to replicate the success of those efforts.

To encourage water conservation in private properties, DEP has launched an automated Leak Notification Program that sends an alert to property owners if there is an unusual spike in water consumption. More than 72,000 customers have signed up for the program and have been able to quickly find and fix leaks on their property, saving more than \$60 million in water charges.

In addition, as part of the City's Greener, Greater Buildings Plan, owners of large buildings are required to annually measure their energy and water consumption in a process called benchmarking. Local Law 84 standardizes this process and captures the information within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's free online benchmarking tool called Portfolio Manager. By empowering building owners, and potential buyers, with a better understanding of a building's energy and water consumption, the market will eventually shift towards increasingly efficient, high-performing buildings.

DEP manages New York 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 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

NYC Health + Hospitals is the largest public health care system in the nation. We are a network of 11 hospitals, trauma centers, neighborhood health centers, nursing homes, and post-acute care centers. We are a home care agency and a health plan, MetroPlus. Our health system provides essential services to 1.4 million New Yorkers every year in more than 70 locations across the city's five boroughs. Our diverse workforce of more than 42,000 employees are uniquely focused on empowering New Yorkers, without exception, to live the healthiest life possible. Visit NYC Health + Hospitals at nychealthandhospitals.org and stay connected on [facebook.com/nycHHC](https://www.facebook.com/nycHHC) or Twitter [@NYCHHealthSystem](https://twitter.com/NYCHHealthSystem).

Memorial Sloan Kettering is the world's oldest and largest private cancer center, home to more than 14,000 physicians, scientists, nurses, and staff who are united by a relentless dedication to conquering cancer. As an independent institution, we combine over 130 years of research and clinical leadership with the freedom to provide highly individualized, exceptional care to each patient. And our always-evolving educational programs continue to train new leaders in the field, here and around the world. For more information, go to mskcc.org.

NewYork-Presbyterian/Queens, located in Flushing, New York, is a community teaching hospital affiliated with Weill Cornell Medicine that serves Queens and metro New York residents. The 535-bed tertiary care facility provides services in 14 clinical departments and numerous subspecialties, including 15,000 surgeries and 4,000 infant deliveries each year. With its network of affiliated primary and multispecialty care physician practices and community-based health centers, the hospital provides approximately 162,000 ambulatory care visits and 124,000 emergency service visits annually. For more information, visit nyp.org/queens.

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