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DEP Opens New Lab in Grahamsville

New Facility Will Streamline Drinking Water Quality Monitoring

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the opening of a new \$13.7 million facility in Grahamsville that will modernize lab operations and enhance drinking water quality monitoring in the Delaware watershed, which supplies roughly 50% of New York City's daily drinking water needs. The new lab will perform water sampling analysis for different bacteriological, chemical and physical characteristics to determine if New York City drinking water is meeting all Federal and State standards. Modernizing lab operations will also improve rapid testing turnaround times and expedite response times to water quality concerns. Construction on the new lab started in 2006.

"DEP performs more than 500,000 water quality tests each year to ensure that NYC Water is the best, and more than 230,000 are conducted at the source waters of our supply," said Commissioner Holloway. "The new Grahamsville lab, located in close proximity to Rondout Reservoir, consolidates and streamlines our monitoring and testing capacity right where our highest quality water comes from. Mayor Bloomberg has invested hundreds of millions of dollars to protect New York City's watersheds, and this state-of-the-art laboratory will give us up-to-the-minute data to ensure that we continue to meet water quality standards for the 9 million New Yorkers who rely on the City's water supply every day."

The project added 12,000 square feet of upgraded space to the existing 5,000 square foot facility that was built in 1964. That additional space includes a new 3,500-square-foot lab that replaces 1,700 square feet of lab space that was scattered in the existing structure and in several nearby trailers. The Grahamsville lab will streamline testing procedures and optimize quality control. The expansion and modernization of the laboratory will allow DEP chemists, microbiologists, and scientists to work more efficiently in monitoring microbiological and other contaminants to ensure that all regulatory and water supply operational requirements are effectively met. The new lab will employ

MORE INFORMATION

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modern equipment such as incubators, sterilizers, purification systems and microscopes with video displays tied to computers that will be used to capture and magnify images of contaminants. To monitor water quality, DEP will also use a turbidimeter, which will look at the turbidity, or cloudiness, of water samples. The lab is expected to receive more than 2,500 samples from streams, reservoirs, aqueducts, and wastewater treatment plants in the Delaware watershed and perform more than 20,000 chemical and microbiological analyses each year.

The new facility increased office and administrative space for 27 additional laboratory and technical staff and has an area for receiving and preparing water samples, two conference rooms and a library. The existing structure will now be renovated to provide more office space for an additional 22 staff.

DEP supplies 1 billion gallons of drinking water to 9 million New York State residents every day, including 8 million in New York City, and residents in portions of Ulster, Orange, Putnam, and Westchester Counties. DEP's watershed is comprised of 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and seven wastewater treatment plants. Approximately 1,000 DEP employees live and work in watershed communities as scientists, engineers, surveyors, administrative professionals, and other critical vocations.

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