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New York City and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Launch 2012 “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches” Program

Program to Reduce Beach Trash by Combatting Litter on Streets and in Parks;

*Volunteer Cleanups Will Be Held at Six City Beaches in August, Reusable Tote Bags Will Be
Distributed at Beach Entrances*

New York City Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland, Sanitation Commissioner John Doherty, Parks Brooklyn Borough Commissioner Kevin Jeffrey, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Region 2 Administrator George Pavlou today launched “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches”, a public information campaign and beach clean-up program aimed at improving New York City beaches by preventing littering. When it rains, litter washes down storm drains and can end up on beaches. This summer, “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches” posters will be displayed at area beaches and on approximately 2,000 Sanitation vehicles citywide, and DEP employees will be at area beaches exchanging reusable tote bags for plastic or paper bags. In addition, beach clean-up events are planned at six New York City beaches. Commissioners Strickland, Doherty, Jeffrey and Deputy Administrator Pavlou were also joined by New York Aquarium Director Jon Forrest Dohlin. The program was launched at MCU Park at Coney Island, home of the Brooklyn Cyclones, where the Commissioners and Deputy Administrator threw out the ceremonial first pitch of the game. Environmental Protection staff also distributed “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches” flyer toys to approximately 5,000 children in attendance from area day camps.

“Clean beaches require clean water, and already New York Harbor is the cleanest it has been in more than 100 years—a testament to the remarkable progress made over the last 10 years,” said Environmental Protection Commissioner Strickland “Under Mayor Bloomberg’s leadership we have placed renewed emphasis on managing storm water, most notably through the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan. Thanks to our partners in both city and federal government, we will continue to highlight the critical link between clean streets and clean water so that beaches remain safe, clean, and enjoyable for all New Yorkers.”

“The ‘Clean Streets = Clean Beaches’ campaign stresses the importance of cooperation, not only among federal and city agencies, but also among all New Yorkers,” Department of Sanitation Commissioner Doherty said. “Keeping New York City and our local beaches clean and beautiful is everybody’s responsibility. Through DSNY cleaning efforts, and those of various partnerships and public participation, New York City remains the cleanest it’s been in 35 years.”

“Spreading awareness of the negative impacts of trash on the city’s environment is an important step towards a cleaner and greener New York,” said Brooklyn Parks Commissioner Kevin Jeffrey. “Keeping our beaches clean is a top priority for the Parks Department, and it needs to be a top priority for New York’s beachgoers as well. Parks is grateful to everyone involved in the Clean Streets = Clean Beaches program, particularly the volunteers who have pitched-in their time.”

"The ‘Clean Streets = Clean Beaches’ campaign is about taking pride in your community," said EPA Deputy Regional Administrator George Pavlou. "Litter on our streets can end up in our sewers, which can end up on our beaches. Taking a moment to make sure trash is disposed of properly can make a positive impact wherever you live."

"The Wildlife Conservation Society is committed to protecting wildlife and their habitats around the world—including the New York Seascape project which focuses on conserving local waters," said Jon Forrest Dohlin, Wildlife Conservation Society Vice President and Director of the New York Aquarium. "By helping to control litter in the streets and volunteering for community beach cleanups, everyone can make a difference and take an active role in the conservation of our natural resources."

The “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches” campaign began in the early 1990s to highlight the link between litter on the streets and trash found on area beaches. The 2012 program will debut a new informational poster for display at area beaches as well as on Department of Sanitation fleet vehicles, which include approximately 450 mechanical brooms that sweep litter from more than 6,000 miles of streets per day. Additionally, the Department services more than 25,000 litter baskets daily. Each year, litter discarded on New York City streets and in parks can be washed into the city sewer system and eventually end up at area beaches. The Department of Environmental Protection inspects and cleans approximately 144,000 catch basins city-wide which trap litter before it makes its way into the sewer line. They also own and operates a fleet of five skimmer boats which, along with booms surrounding 23 major sewer outfalls throughout the city, are used to capture floating waste in waterways, including wood, plastic, metal, rubber, and glass. Since 2002, the City has committed more than \$10 billion to improve water quality, leading to New York Harbor being the cleanest it has been in more than 100 years.

The 2012 “Clean Streets = Clean Beaches” program will include six volunteer beach cleanups at City beaches on August 12th: Gerritsen, Kaiser Park, and Plumb Beaches in Brooklyn; Pugsley Creek Park in the Bronx; Conference House Beach in Staten Island; and Rockaway Beach in Queens. Department of Environmental Protection staff will be assigned to entrances at various beaches throughout the city to offer reusable tote bags in exchange for visitors’ disposable plastic or paper bags. For information on volunteering, visit www.nyc.gov.

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