



Fall Foliage

Pepacton Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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DEP Expands Program to Relieve Water and Sewer Debt

Relief Now Available for Up to 1,400 Single-Family Property Owners at Risk of Foreclosure

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the expansion of the [Water Debt Assistance Program](#) to assist homeowners at risk of foreclosure of past-due water and sewer debt. As part of the original program launched last month by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, DEP removed eligible two- or three-family homeowners at risk of foreclosure from the lien sale list and deferred their outstanding debt until the property is sold, refinanced or the owner has the ability to pay the debt. In exchange, homeowners are required to pay all subsequent water bills on time to remain in the program. Those properties comprised owner occupied two- or three-family homes. Under the expanded program being launched today, owners of single-family homes who are at risk of foreclosure and who would be eligible for service termination because of past-due water and sewer debt can apply to have their water and sewer debt deferred.

"In his 2010 State of the City Address, Mayor Bloomberg pledged to launch the most ambitious foreclosure prevention effort in the country. The expansion of the Water Debt Assistance Program to include single-family homes is another step in that direction and will help those in financial distress by putting a temporary freeze on their water and sewer debts," said Commissioner Holloway. "And while it is critically important for homeowners to pay their fair share of the cost to bring one billion gallons of water into New York City every day, we must recognize the unprecedented financial pressures that many hard-working New Yorkers are facing, and help to relieve the burden where we can."

"Expanding the Water Debt Assistance Program to include those who might be eligible for service terminations is another example of DEP throwing a lifeline to the most vulnerable New Yorkers," said Council Member James F. Gennaro, chairman of the Committee on Environmental Protection. "Homeowners facing unexpected difficulty making ends meet and facing mortgage foreclosure should not have their water shut off. This program relieves that pressure until homeowners can get back on their feet. This

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is one more example of how the Bloomberg administration has been working hard to respond to the needs of struggling New Yorkers. I encourage all eligible homeowners in Queens to take advantage of the expanded Water Debt Assistance Program."

"This is an important step toward protecting the hard-working New Yorkers who are struggling through a devastating financial climate," said Council Member Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., chairman of the Finance Committee. "By temporarily deferring water and sewer debts, we are giving families an opportunity to get their bills under control, without the fear of losing water and sewer services — or even worse, their homes through foreclosure. I would like to thank Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Holloway for expanding this ambitious program, so we can keep New Yorkers from getting drowned by debt."

"I strongly urge all eligible homeowners to take advantage of DEP's new Water Debt Assistance Program, which provides necessary relief to at-risk homeowners," said Council Member Leroy Comrie, the Deputy Majority Leader. "With Southeast Queens' foreclosure rates being one of the highest in the city, the Debt Assistance Program offers residents breathing room to focus on home-ownership preservation. I applaud DEP and the administration for making great strides to protect New York City's middle class."

"While it's important that every New Yorker pay their fair share for the cost of our water supply, government can and must work to assist those who are under financial duress when possible, especially during a time of economic turmoil when jobs are scarce and family resources are depleted, pushing many single family homeowners to the edge of foreclosure," said Council Member Thomas White Jr. "The expansion of this program will continue to deepen the City's foreclosure prevention toolbox, helping to preserve and protect homeowners in the community that I represent, as well as other hard hit areas of NYC."

Single-family homeowners who qualify and enroll in the [Water Debt Assistance Program](#) will be removed from a list of those eligible for service termination due to unpaid water and sewer debts. Eligible homeowners must have more than \$500 in past water dues, outstanding for more than six months, and have received formal notice of serious delinquency from their mortgage lender. By joining the program, homeowners will acknowledge their existing debt, agree to pay all future water bills on time, and commit to repay the debt in full by the time the property is sold, transferred or refinanced. Homeowners interested in the program can schedule a pre-qualification appointment or learn more about the program by calling 311 or visiting nyc.gov/dep.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City. New York City's water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 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 7,400 miles of sewer lines take wastewater to 14 in-City treatment plants.

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