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Department of Environmental Protection and American Water Resources Announce That More Than 100,000 Homeowners Have Enrolled in Service Line Protection Program

**Since Program Launched in January, More than 2,000
Repairs Have Been Made Across the Five Boroughs**

**Optional Protection Program Has Already Saved Enrolled
Customers More Than \$7 Million in Unexpected Cost of
Repairs to Residential Water and Sewer Lines**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland and American Water Resources (AWR) President Malcolm Conner today announced that more than 100,000 homeowners in New York City have signed up for the water and sewer Service Line Protection Program that launched in January. So far, the program has saved these customers more than \$7 million in repair charges that would have otherwise been paid out of pocket. During the program's first year, AWR has performed more than 2,000 repairs across the five boroughs and more than 95 percent of customers surveyed are very satisfied with the service. Commissioner Strickland and AWR President Conner were joined at the announcement by homeowner Ronald Robins, who signed up for the Service Line Protection Program in July and recently had his water service line replaced following an unexpected leak.

"We established the Service Line Protection Program to shield homeowners from

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unexpected repair costs and, in less than a year, thousands of New Yorkers have already benefited from the program,” said DEP Commissioner Strickland. “At DEP we are committed to customer service and it is rewarding to see that more than 95 percent of New Yorkers who have signed up for this program are happy with it.”

“We’re extremely proud of the customer satisfaction levels we’re achieving with this program,” said AWR President Conner. “The more than 2,000 homeowners that we’ve helped have truly appreciated the expedient, hassle-free service we provided. In most instances, we were able to deploy local, qualified contractors to make the needed repairs and restore service within 24 hours. In addition, the NYC licensed master plumbers that we work with restore the homeowners’ properties. All of this is done without any additional fees beyond their enrollment costs.”

Brooklyn homeowner Ronald Robins told officials he felt “lucky” that the water line leak on his property happened when it did, instead of prior to his enrolling in the program a few months ago. “Nobody wants to have a water or sewer line problem, but if it had to happen, I’m just glad it happened after I signed up for the protection program because everything was covered and I didn’t have to worry about the cost or finding a plumber,” Robins said. “I called the customer service number, and within a few hours someone was here to help me.”

“Hardworking New Yorkers know a good deal when they see one. Instead of finding themselves on the receiving end of thousands of dollars in emergency repair costs to their water and sewer lines, this service line protection program not only gives homeowners across the city peace of mind, but will result in millions of dollars in savings for cash-strapped families,” said Council Member James F. Gennaro. “The fact that more than 100,000 households have signed up for the program is proof of the high demand in our city for low-cost and effective protections that reduce the financial burden posed by these unexpected repair costs. I congratulate DEP for identifying the problem and building the right program to address it.”

“I am proud to have supported this program and am encouraged that so many New York City residents are taking advantage of it already,” said Senator Marty Golden. “In this economic climate, we must look for ways to continue to keep cost down for homeowners, and I hope that as we reach this milestone, we, at the same time, continue to encourage residents to sign up for this program.”

“Far too many homeowners are unaware that they are responsible for the lines that connect their homes to the city water and sewer lines,” said Council Member James Oddo. “Unfortunately, if misfortune strikes, that ignorance could cost them \$5,000 to repair a water line, and \$15,000 to repair a sewer line. I urge all homeowners to consider joining the more than 100,000 who have already purchased a Service Line Protection Plan. For a relatively painless \$12.50 a month, you can have peace of mind that you won’t be hit with a sudden expenditure of thousands of dollars, and the cost of the Plan is simply added to your water and sewer bill every quarter. I’m so convinced that this is a protection policy that every homeowner should have, I enrolled in the program for my own home.”

“This program creatively limits homeowners’ risks and saves New Yorkers thousands of dollars in water and sewer repair services,” said Council Member Mark Weprin.

“I’m excited to see so many homeowners saving money and obtaining the protection they need by enrolling in the service line protection program,” said Council Member Stephen Levin. I want to thank Commissioner Carter Strickland and American Water Resources President Malcolm Conner for their great work to help New York City homeowners.”

Property owners in New York City are responsible for maintaining their water and sewer service lines, which are buried underground and run from the building to the City-owned mains under the street. On average, it costs property owners

in New York City between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to repair a water line break and between \$10,000 and \$15,000 to repair a sewer line break.

In 2012, DEP responded to more than 3,000 reported leaks, of which 77 percent were discovered to be private service line problems. To help property owners better manage these risks and the high costs of service line breaks, the New York City Water Board issued a Request for Proposals from qualified providers for a Service Line Protection Program in 2011. After a thorough review, AWR was awarded a contract to administer the Service Line Protection Program for the roughly 670,000 eligible properties in New York City. Since the program launched in January, 101,458 homeowners have signed up for the program, with the highest enrollment in Queens, followed by Brooklyn, Staten Island and the Bronx.

DEP customers are eligible to participate if they have a single service line of 2 inches or less, and protection starts after a 30-day waiting period from signing up with the program. The current costs of the Service Line Protection Program are \$4.49 per month to protect the water line and \$7.99 per month for the sewer line. For future years, the New York City Water Board will approve annual rates for the Service Line Protection Program at the same time it adopts water and sewer service charges. Customers who choose to join the program may elect to protect both their water and sewer lines, or just one of the lines. They may also discontinue their involvement with the programs at any time if they no longer wish to participate. Further information about the programs and the eligibility for individual properties is available online at AWRUSA.com/NYC or by calling 1-888-300-3570.

The Service Line Protection Program provides unlimited protection for covered repairs and basic restoration of the affected property. It also provides for an unlimited number of claims, 24/7 customer service, and quick response time by NYC licensed master plumbers who are pre-qualified to perform needed repairs. For the convenience of those who choose to participate, there are no claim forms to submit and no deductibles, and the monthly program fee will be itemized and included on each participating customer's regular DEP water and sewer bill.

At no cost to the City and at an affordable cost to the customer, AWR fully manages the Protection Program – from educating homeowners about their responsibility to maintain their water and sewer service lines, to establishing a network of local, independent contractors and providing 24-hour customer service. AWR's network of local independent contractors is comprised of NYC licensed master plumbers, who are on-call to respond to the service line issues of participating customers.

In addition to managing the Service Line Protection program for New York City, AWR also provides Water Line Protection, Sewer Line Protection, and In-Home Plumbing Emergency Programs to homeowners in 36 states, and AWR currently services more than one million contracts. A subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), the largest publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company, AWR has been providing service line programs to homeowners for more than 12 years and is accredited with an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau.

Establishing a Service Line Protection Program is a key component of DEP's Strategy 2011-2014, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to help make it the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation. DEP is the largest municipally owned water and wastewater utility in the United States.

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. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. 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 at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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