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CONTACT:

Michael Saucier (718) 595-6600

MORE INFORMATION

NYC Department of
Environmental Protection
Communications &
Intergovernmental Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373

(718) 595 - 6600

Statement from Deputy Commissioner Paul Rush on Releasing Water From Pepacton and Neversink Reservoirs Ahead of Storm

"Based on the potential impacts that Hurricane Irene may have on the reservoir system, DEP has increased the water release rates from the Neversink and Pepacton reservoirs. The increased releases enhance the reservoirs' ability to absorb storm inflow and are provided for in the Flexible Flow Management Plan that went into effect on June 1, 2011. The plan is intended to provide a more adaptive means for managing the Cannonsville, Pepacton, and Neversink reservoirs. We will continue higher releases as needed and began releasing water at both reservoirs yesterday at approximately 3 pm. At Pepacton, we are now releasing approximately 453 million gallons a day; and at Neversink we are releasing approximately 123 million gallons of water a day—both rates are the maximum rates for each reservoir permitted under the plan.

"Releasing more water now will create more storage capacity in these reservoirs to capture storm runoff, which will help to minimize any potential negative impacts on the surrounding community or to drinking water quality. The releases are made possible in part because of DEP's multi-million dollar investment in the new Operations Support Tool, a high-tech computer application which allows DEP to better predict reservoir-specific water storage levels, quality, and inflows. The Operations Support Tool gives a level of certainty that was not previously possible about when it is safe to release water without depleting the water supply of nine million New Yorkers."

DEP manages the 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, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. The DEP police protect the watershed and its facilities, including seven wastewater treatment plants. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater.