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Fall Foliage

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

08-10

April 17, 2008

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Payment Incentive Program Ends Tuesday (April 22) for Delinquent Account Holders

Average discounts between 35% and 40%

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that there is less than one week left for delinquent water and sewer customers to enroll in the unprecedented Payment Incentive Program, which offers deep discounts for single-family home customers owing \$1,000 or more for one year or longer. The program removes 100% of late payment charges, caps utility charges at \$2 per day, and results in an approximately 35%-40% discount to most single family homeowners.

DEP is continuing service terminations to residential properties for non-payment of water and sewer bills. Of 165 properties identified over the last several weeks for service termination, 95% paid or entered into a payment agreement before service was actually terminated; only 8 were terminated.

“This is the last chance for customers to take advantage of significant savings on their water bills and I urge everyone who has received a notice to do so,” said Commissioner Emily Lloyd. “The Payment Incentive Program is designed to give our delinquent customers--many of whom may have had account problems for many years--a chance to reestablish a regular payment pattern, in advance of full scale implementation of our new enforcement programs. We hope everyone who is eligible will take advantage of this opportunity now.”

The service terminations come after months of notifications. Over the past 6 months, DEP has sent these customers 14 reminder notices, worked with City Council members to co-host 18 outreach events Citywide with live customer service support, called them numerous times and advertised extensively via radio, cable and newspapers, and in subway stations and bus shelters and on subway cars. Customers who have not taken advantage of the incentive offer are eligible for service termination and lien sale. The City's first residential stand alone lien sale will be held May 19.

In recognition of the current mortgage and foreclosure climate, DEP has created a Safety Net Referral Program for

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water and sewer customers. The Safety Net Referral Program draws on a network of existing City and not-for-profit programs, including the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development's recently announced Center for NYC Neighborhoods, which assists homeowners at risk of mortgage foreclosure throughout the five boroughs, and the Human Resource Administration's Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), which can help homeowners pay for heating fuel, equipment and repairs with annual or emergency grants. Customers who qualify based on means, age, and/or debt ratio can access the network of citywide assistance programs by calling 311 or DEP customer service call center at 718-595-7000. So far, 424 of eligible customers have taken advantage of this program.