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Fall Foliage

Pepacton Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York City DEP Will Cease Fluoridation Of Catskill/Delaware Water Supply System For Four Months To Complete Infrastructure Work

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will temporarily suspend fluoridating the Catskill/Delaware water supply system for a four-month period in order to complete critical system repairs. The repairs will necessitate the shutdown of the Delaware Aqueduct periodically, and as a result, the operation of the fluoridation system will need to be interrupted. DEP will be replacing sluice gate operators at the Kensico Reservoir facility and must complete this work by May 2003 to comply with an administrative order of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The four-month period will commence the week of January 19th, 2003.

Pursuant to the New York City Health Code (Article 141), New York City is required to fluoridate the public water supply. Fluoride has been added to the City's water supply since 1965. Intermittent disruption of fluoridation has taken place in the past. The City's water supply will not otherwise be affected by the shutdown of the aqueduct. DEP has received authorization to proceed with this plan from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, which is satisfied that this brief interruption of fluoridation to the City's water supply will not have a significant impact on dental health.

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward said, " We need to complete these improvements to the water supply infrastructure in a timely manner, and after discussions with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene we have been assured that this short-term cessation of fluoridation will not raise any health concerns for the public."

New York City Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner, Dr. Thomas R. Frieden said, "The benefits of fluoridation accrue over long periods of time, and we are satisfied that the brief suspension of this process will not be detrimental to the dental health of New Yorkers."

Dr. William R. Calnon, president of the New York State Dental Association said, "Fluoride is present naturally in most water sources (including the New York City water supply), and community water fluoridation adjusts the

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fluoride content to the recommended level for optimal dental health. The New York State Dental Association commends New York City for its commitment to public health through water fluoridation. The absence of fluoride adjustments in the New York City water supply during this brief period will not be detrimental to New Yorkers," continued Dr. Calnon, "and consumers are encouraged to continue using topical fluorides found in products such as toothpaste and mouth rinses. For your individual family fluoride needs, it is best to consult with your own dentist."

The Catskill and Delaware watersheds normally provide ninety percent of the drinking water supply of the City, and the Croton system provides approximately ten percent. Communities in Westchester County are supplied with water from the New York City systems.

For further information about the New York City water supply, contact DEP at 718-595-6600 or visit our web site at nyc.gov/dep.

For questions or concerns about fluoridation and any affect it may have on dental health, call the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOH) Information line at 877-692-3647 or visit the DOH web site at nyc.gov/health.

You may also wish to contact the American Dental Association web site at <http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/fluoride.html>, or any dentist or dental practitioner.