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Fall Foliage

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City Introduces New Public Access Permit System For Recreational Use On Water Supply Lands

Commissioner Joel A. Miele Sr., P.E., of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the agency is introducing a new Public Access Permit system for certain Water Supply reservoirs and lands. All City-owned properties have been closed and individual recreational permits suspended as a security precaution in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Under the new system, all current permit holders — anglers, rowboaters, hikers and hunters alike - must acquire a new Public Access Permit that will allow for access to designated, City-owned properties in the watershed when they are reopened.

"We have reviewed and continue to review our security practices in consultation with federal, State and City agencies, and the FBI has notified police agencies nationwide to remain on high alert through March 11, 2002," said Commissioner Miele. "Unfortunately, we have had to cancel ice fishing on Croton System reservoirs this winter and, at this time, we cannot say precisely when Water Supply lands will be reopened. To allow recreational use of City-owned lands to resume, however, it has been determined that we must revamp DEP's permit system to enhance our ability to identify users and to maintain complete records."

"The one Public Access Permit will afford access to designated City-owned lands for both fishing and hiking and, with additional special registration, for rowboats and hunting," said Commissioner Miele. "By requiring all permit holders to re-apply, DEP will have a current, comprehensive record of each and every active permit holder. DEP takes very seriously the responsibility of delivering water to over nine million people each and every day. We believe that the new permitting system will allow us to do that and still accommodate the many people who treasure the recreational opportunities afforded on Water Supply properties."

Each DEP Public Access Permit will be individually numbered and allow the holder to fish from the shores of reservoirs, and to fish and hike on specified properties acquired by the City since the signing of the Watershed Memorandum of

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Agreement in 1997. All currently valid five-year boating permits will remain valid, but each permittee must apply for a new Public Access Permit. Those who want to register for hunting in the future, or register a new rowboat, must have a Public Access Permit to obtain these additional benefits. More information about boating and hunting registration and any revised procedures for those uses will be provided later this spring and fall.

To obtain a new Public Access Permit, current permit holders and new applicants must fill out an application form and send it to the specified address. DEP will mail applications for Public Access Permits to all current holders of five-year fishing permits and hiking permits, to all registered boat owners, and to everyone who has applied for a hunting permit in the past. While current holders of lifetime and five-year permits may retain their old permit cards, they must apply for the new Public Access Permits. Only permits issued in 2002 or thereafter will be acceptable for admittance to City lands.

DEP will supply town halls and bait and tackle shops in the watershed with application forms. All DEP Police Precincts and Protection Permit Offices will have applications. Additionally, people can print the application directly from the DEP Web site at www.nyc.gov/watershedrecreation. If currently registered permit holders have not received a new application form from DEP by March 1, they should obtain and fill out a new application form.

Completed applications must be mailed to NYCDEP, 71 Smith Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401. Once an application is received and accepted by DEP, a 2002 permit will be generated and the applicant will receive notice that it can be picked up — in person with an acceptable, government-issued photo identification — at the DEP Police precinct specified by the applicant on the application form.

"DEP has appreciated the support, recommendations and patience of all the users of our Water Supply lands during these trying times," said Commissioner Miele. "Now I want to encourage people to send in their applications as soon as they receive them so that we can process them before the lands are reopened," said Commissioner Miele. "This new permit system will enable us to better manage and facilitate recreational use and to help us avoid disruptions to access in the future. Once the new permit system is in place, DEP will be able to communicate better with recreational permit holders and work more closely with groups interested in outdoor recreational activities as well as the protection and continued use of Water Supply lands."

People with questions about obtaining new permits may call 1-800-575-LAND.

Applications may be obtained at the following DEP locations:
DEP Web site: nyc.gov/watershedrecreation

Police Precincts [Normal business hours Monday-Friday]
Ashokan Precinct, Route 28A, Shokan - 845/657-8433
Beerston Precinct, Route 10 south of Walton - 607/865-4185
Croton Precinct, Route 129, 1.5 mile south of the Taconic Parkway, Yorktown - 914/245-6694
Downsville Precinct, Route 30, Downsville - 607/363-9000
Hillview Precinct, 100 Central Park Avenue North, Yonkers - 914/237-3720
Neversink Precinct, Route 55, Neversink - 845/292-4315

Protection Permit Offices [Permit Offices are closed

during winter months, but applications will be available in boxes outside the offices.]

Croton (East of Hudson) Reservoirs, 54 Croton Falls Road, Mahopac, NY 10541 - 914/232-1309

Ashokan Reservoir, Route 28A, Shokan, NY 12468 - 845/657-2663

Rondout & Neversink Reservoirs, Route 42, Grahamsville, NY 12740 - 845/985-2524

Pepacton & Cannonsville Reservoirs, Route 30, Downsville, NY 13755 - 607/363-7009

DEP Offices in the City [Normal business hours Monday-Friday]

Bureau of Customer Services, 1250 Broadway (8th Floor), New York, NY 10001 - 212/643-2215

One-Stop Center (First Floor), 96-05 Horace Harding Expressway, Corona, NY 11368 - 718/595-4820