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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

03-29

May 30, 2003

Contact: Charles G. Sturcken (718) 595-6600

DEP Issues Reminder To New Yorkers To Observe Seasonal Water Use Rules

DEP Commissioner Christopher O. Ward announced today that the City’s reservoirs are at 100%, just where they should be at June 1st, the start of the traditional water year. At the same time he stressed the importance of New Yorkers being more diligent than ever in observing seasonal water use rules and conserving water.

“We mark June 1 as the date at which reservoirs should be at 100% capacity in order to serve the City’s needs for the coming year,” said Commissioner Ward. “This year, unlike last, when we were in a critical drought on this date,” he continued, “we have experienced plentiful amounts of rain that have filled our reservoirs to the brim. But there’s always a chance that the abundant rains will stop, and we’ll be glad we were careful in our efforts to avoid wasting water.”

“There are always a number of seasonal water rules in effect,” continued Commissioner Ward. “They are applicable during the fall and winter from November 1 through March 31; while between April 1 and October 31, some of the rules are altered to allow for warm weather activities. The only time seasonal water use rules are revised is during droughts. Among year-round rules that never change is the prohibition against restaurants serving water unless requested by patrons, and the strictly enforced prohibition against illegally opening fire hydrants.

New Yorkers can seriously endanger themselves when they illegally open hydrants. Water pressure is lowered and fire fighters are hindered in their fire fighting efforts. A hydrant running at full force can actually propel a child into oncoming traffic. In addition, opening fire hydrants can contribute to street flooding and sewer backups. People who wish to cool off on hot days can obtain special spray caps from local fire departments. The spray cap limits the flow to 25 gallons a minute instead of wasting one thousand gallons of water a minute and children can play safely in a cooling spray.

Seasonal rules – April 1 – October 31	Allowed
▶ Washing sidewalks, driveways,	before 11 am after 7 pm

MORE INFORMATION

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Construction, Demolition & Abatement

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streets;

▶ Watering lawns with hose; or using automatic sprinkler;

▶ Swimming pools;

before 11 am after 7 pm

hose must have self-closing nozzle;

automatic rain sensor on sprinklers

no restrictions

For further information about water use regulations and water conservation, visit the DEP website at www.nyc.gov/dep. You may also contact DEP’s public affairs office at (718) 595-6600. Report running or illegally opened hydrants, water or sewer problems to the City’s 24-hour help line at 311.

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