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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ANNOUNCES
EXPANSION OF REMOTE SEWER MONITORING PROGRAM**

*64 Remote Monitoring Sensors Will Detect Elevated Flow Levels and Send an Alert for
Inspection and Preventative Maintenance;*

*Since the Program Began Last Year, Crews Have Responded to 129 Alerts and Prevented
Several Potential Problems*

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced the expansion of a pilot program to remotely monitor flows inside the sewer system allowing crews to proactively respond to problems before they can result in sewage backing up into homes, businesses, or onto streets. Last year, DEP installed 21 remote sewer monitoring devices at strategic locations in Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island. DEP recently installed 25 additional devices throughout the city and is preparing to install another 18 for a total of 64. The remote monitoring devices are installed inside manholes and measure the elevation of wastewater in the sewer. That information is transmitted wirelessly to DEP headquarters where it is tracked and analyzed. If the elevation of the wastewater approaches a level that could result in a surcharge or sewer backup, the sensor sends an alert and crews are dispatched to investigate and, if needed, fix the problem. Since the first sewer monitoring devices were installed last year, DEP crews have successfully responded to 129 device alerts, addressing issues that could have resulted in a surcharge or sewer back-ups.

“Remote monitoring of our sewer system is a great example of how we are using technology to make smart investments and maximize the effectiveness of our resources,” said Commissioner Strickland. “A cornerstone of *Strategy 2011-2014*, our far reaching strategic plan, is to provide the best possible service for our customers at the lowest cost, and this program helps us efficiently deploy our crews.”

“These sewer monitoring devices give DEP the opportunity to identify sewer backups before they occur, allowing crews precious time to proactively address and monitor sewage back-ups,” said Council Member James F. Gennaro (D-Fresh Meadows), chair of the Council’s Committee on Environmental Protection. “The expansion of the Sewer Monitoring Program will take this technology and apply it for the benefit of even more New Yorkers as we continue the fight to reduce the number of sewer back-up events. I want to congratulate Commissioner Strickland for his commitment to provide improved service at reasonable rates for customers.”

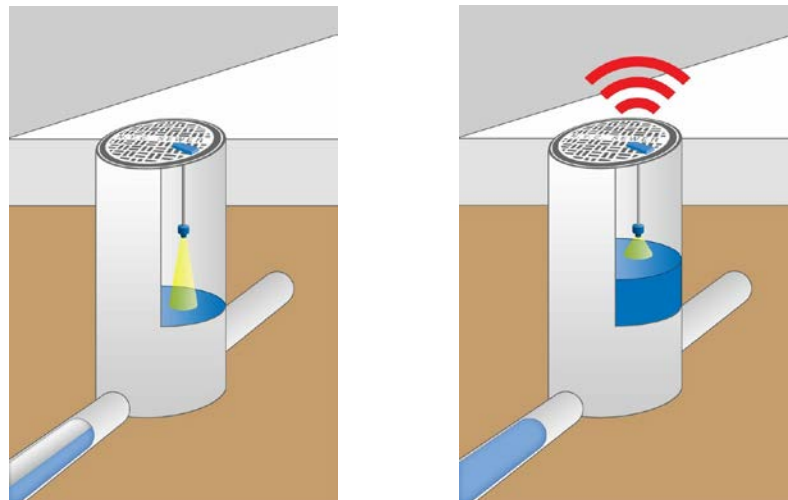
“The expansion of the successful remote sewer monitoring program is great news for our communities that must contend with unpleasant sewage back-ups and overflow situations,” said

Council Member Stephen Levin. I commend Commissioner Strickland and DEP for their proactive use of technology to prevent problems with the City’s sewer infrastructure.”

“The remote sewer monitoring system was first introduced in Southeast Queens, and I am pleased to see it will be expanded throughout the borough, and city, to help communities hampered by severe flooding,” said Councilman Leroy Comrie “This early warning system has allowed the DEP to react quickly to elevated floodwater, preventing further, and more serious, damage. This program has proven successful, and its expansion means that the city will not only be able to take a more proactive approach to addressing flooding citywide, but also be able to better plan future sewer infrastructure projects. I would like to thank Commissioner Strickland and my colleagues in government for expanding this system, and for helping communities disadvantaged with severe flooding.”

DEP is also testing flow monitoring meters that are installed in the bottom of the sewers and measure flow rates. This information, which has never previously been available, will allow engineers to better understand flow rates and identify changes in flow rates that could be a sign of a blockage or some other damage to the sewer. They also facilitate more accurate modeling of the system.

The remote monitoring programs are one component of DEP’s continuing effort to increase proactive maintenance of the sewer system. DEP maintains a robust GIS tool containing digital, searchable maps of all sewer lines, manholes, and other infrastructure to help identify trends and improve preventative maintenance. In 2011, these programs were combined into a single management program that identifies best practices for proactive intervention by field crews. Last year, DEP cleaned nearly 700 miles of sewers, more than double the amount cleaned five years ago.



In December 2012, DEP released its first ever annual State of the Sewers Report. The Report provides an overview of how the City’s sewer system works, DEP’s approach to inspection, cleaning, and repair of the system, a breakdown of the most recurrent causes of sewer blockages, a look at the new employee training facility and safety programs, how advanced analytics, software, and mapping tools are being used to target problematic areas and hydraulic

modeling is guiding designs for future capital projects and citywide and borough by borough performance analytics.

Some key city-wide performance statistics from the last five years include:

- Sewer backup complaints have dropped from more than 21,600 to fewer than 13,900, a decrease of 36%.
- Confirmed sewer backups have dropped from more than 7,700 to fewer than 4,900, a decrease of 37%.
- Less than 1 percent of the city's nearly 160,000 sewer segments experienced recurring back-ups last year. Once identified, segments that experience recurring back-ups are given high priority for maintenance crews.
- Miles of sewer lines cleaned under our programs that target problematic areas has increased from over 320 miles to almost 700 miles, a 116% increase.
- Defective catch basin complaints have dropped from more than 18,000 to 12,370, a 32% decrease.

In addition to proactive monitoring and maintenance, DEP's Executive Budget includes more than \$3.7 billion in water and sewer infrastructure investments for Fiscal Years 2014 to 2023—including nearly \$2.2 billion for sewers—of which \$353.9 million will fund high-level storm sewers to mitigate combined sewer overflows and sewer backups.

DEP manages New York 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. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.