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Department of Environmental Protection Begins Work to Remove Hurricane Debris from Schoharie Reservoir

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) this week began work to remove debris from the bottom of Schoharie Reservoir that was discovered earlier this year. A special dive team will remove the debris, which consists of two metal construction containers and one oil tank. Work to remove the metal boxes and oil tank will take approximately one to two weeks.

The metal boxes were discovered in February when reservoir levels dropped, allowing them to break through the ice and become visible. The oil tank was discovered about one month later when shifting ice dislodged the tank. More information about the debris can be found by [clicking here](#). An analysis of water samples found that no hazardous material reached the Esopus Creek or New York City’s drinking water supply. Water quality scientists continue to test these areas weekly. DEP believes the three items were washed into Schoharie Reservoir in 2011 by Hurricane Irene.

To remove the debris, trained divers will attach rubber, inflatable bags to each of the items. The bags will be slowly inflated until the items rise to the surface and can be towed to the shore. The debris will then be hauled away to a proper disposal facility. Removal of the debris will not have any impact on New York City’s drinking water.

Schoharie Reservoir stores up to 19.6 billion gallons of water that is collected from a 314-square-mile watershed. It diverts that water through the 18-mile Shandaken Tunnel, which discharges into the Esopus Creek where it travels another 11 miles before entering Ashokan Reservoir. From Ashokan Reservoir, the water flows south through the Catskill Aqueduct to New York City.

More Information
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DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](#), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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