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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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DEP Investigating a Potential PERC Source; All New Water Samples Meet Regulatory Standards

None of the 24 water sample results received by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) this morning has exceeded regulatory standards for tetrachloroethylene (PERC), and 21 contained no PERC at all. The samples, taken from sections of the St. Albans, Hollis, Cambria Heights, and Queens Village neighborhoods in Queens, indicate that the average PERC level continues to decline, with the average from the above 24 samples at 0.2 parts per billion (ppb), significantly below the US Environmental Protection Agency's maximum contaminant level of 5 ppb.

Since Monday, DEP has committed all available resources in response to minute amounts of PERC detected during routine water sampling earlier this week in sections of the St. Albans, Cambria Heights, Queens Village and Hollis neighborhoods in Queens. Citywide tests show no detectable PERC outside these localized areas. PERC is a chemical commonly used in dry cleaning and auto-body repair.

To date DEP has analyzed 105 samples from the relevant area. Of these:

- ▶ 55 samples detected no presence of PERC.
- ▶ 50 of the samples detected PERC, and 20 of these demonstrated levels of PERC above 5 ppb, though none of these have occurred since early Thursday.
- ▶ The average PERC level for these 105 samples was 2.3 ppb, far below the regulatory standard.

In addition, DEP inspectors discovered an illegal connection to the City's drinking water system at Cambria Car Wash, located at 208-15 Linden Boulevard in Queens, late yesterday evening. The owner of the car wash is cooperating with DEP's efforts to determine the source of contamination, and has voluntarily granted DEP permission to terminate the illegal connection and to test a groundwater well located on the premises. Until test results are received, DEP cannot determine whether or not the car wash is a source of the PERC. To date, DEP has surveyed 349 businesses located in this area of southeast Queens and

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will continue further inspections.

DEP's efforts in the Queens area have included extensive public outreach, with flyers distributed to nearly all of the 12,000 residences in the potentially contaminated area; the flushing of hydrants to drain the contaminated water from the local distribution network; and the comprehensive inspection of local businesses to check for potentially faulty water/sewer connections, which led DEP inspectors to identify the illegal connection at Cambria Car Wash last night.

Any potential health effects would depend on the duration and concentration of exposure to PERC. No known long- or short-term health problems would be expected from the concentrations detected in Queens for people drinking, cooking or bathing in the water for a matter of weeks. DEP has a resource center on site at Springfield Boulevard between 110th and 112th Avenues to provide information to local residents. Information is also available on DEP's website at nyc.gov/DEP. Residents with non-emergency questions can call the City's helpline at 3-1-1.