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Department of Environmental Protection Joins Statewide Effort to Educate New Yorkers About Invasive Species

DEP will support New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week with Public Education Stops in Delaware and Putnam Counties

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that it has joined a statewide effort to educate New Yorkers about invasive species, their effects on our ecosystems, and what citizens can do to prevent their spread across the watershed and other parts of the state. As part of New York Invasive Species Awareness Week, July 10-16, DEP will set up education tents at farmers' markets in towns adjacent to the City's reservoir system. As the effects of invasive species are seen throughout the state, DEP has continued to protect the watershed through education and outreach efforts, surveys to identify new infestations early, and control projects to suppress the growth of priority invasive species that could threaten water quality by hampering or changing forest regeneration, or affecting the ecology of watershed streams and reservoirs.


"Public information is one of the best tools we have in the fight against invasive species," **DEP Acting Commissioner Vincent Sapienza** said. "There are small, effective steps that every New Yorker can take to protect our environment by preventing the spread of animals, plants and microorganisms from other parts of the globe. As we share this information, DEP will continue to be aggressive with programs to identify invasive species in our watershed, remove them, and prevent their spread wherever possible."

New York State's Invasive Species Awareness Week was established in 2014 to promote knowledge of invasive species, to help stop their spread by engaging citizens in a wide range of activities, and to encourage New Yorkers to take action. For its part, DEP will share information about invasive species at two farmers' markets in the watershed, including Cold Spring on July 9 in Putnam County, and Pakatakan on July 16 in Delaware County.

Because the spread of invasive species poses a risk to New York City's reservoirs and the forest lands that protect clean water, DEP has long administered programs to prevent, detect and remove them. DEP was among the first groups in New York to require steam cleaning for all boats entering its waters. Steam cleaning disinfects the boats and prevents the spread of invasive species such as zebra mussels, which can harm water quality and clog water intakes. The City has also encouraged local residents and watershed visitors to arrive with clean, drained, and dry gear, and to never dump leftover bait or aquariums that can contain invasive species.

New York City reservoirs are regularly surveyed for aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels, hydrilla and water chestnut. Particular focus is given to the areas

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