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DEP to Demolish Two Out-of-Service Water Tanks in Queens

Removal of Obsolete Tanks Underscores Strength of Local Water Infrastructure

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the demolition of two elevated water storage tanks in Queens. The tanks – located at 93-02 199 Street, in Hollis, and 84-02 164 Street, in Jamaica Hill – are no longer part of the water distribution network, and local elected officials and community organizations have requested their removal. Site mobilization for the demolition process started March 1. The 199 Street tank will be demolished next weekend and the tank at 164 Street will be demolished the second week of April. The cost for both demolitions is \$545,000.

"Demolishing these obsolete, unsightly tanks is possible because of the investments that Mayor Bloomberg has made in the Queens water supply network," said Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway. "While these tanks once served a useful purpose, they have become a blemish on the communities they once served, and their removal is a testament to the progress we've made improving the City's water infrastructure. I want to thank all of the local elected officials and the residents and other stakeholders in these communities for working with us to get this done."

"I commend DEP Commissioner Cas Holloway for his efforts in ensuring that the unused elevated water storage tanks be demolished," said State Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm A. Smith. "The tanks are an eyesore for my constituents in Hollis and I am pleased that the DEP is finally removing them."

"I want to commend the New York City Department of Environmental Protection for reaching a resolution on this matter and removing these unused water tanks," said State Senator Frank Padavan. "Today's announcement is a prime example of locally focused environmental action that will make a difference in our community today and well into the future."

"These water towers are eyesores. The community spoke

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out against them, and I applaud DEP for listening and committing to safely removing them," said Assembly Member Rory Lancman.

"I am very pleased to see that the DEP is removing these obsolete Jamaica Water Supply Towers," said Assembly Member William Scarborough. "They are no longer functional. In some instances there have been safety concerns and they are an eyesore in our community."

"The Department of Environmental Protection took action years ago to take over the Jamaica Water Service (JWS) and close down certain JWS wells that did not meet DEP's excellent standards for drinking water quality," said Council Member James F. Gennaro. The water customers formerly served by these defunct wells now receive the best drinking water in the country – straight from the city's pristine reservoirs in the Catskill Mountains, courtesy of DEP. Since these long-defunct towers and wells can never deliver the high quality water that all New Yorkers expect and deserve, it's time to take them down. So, 'down' with the towers of a defunct water system, 'up' with providing the best pure mountain spring water in the country to New York City families."

"I am pleased that DEP is removing the water storage tanks," said Council Member Mark S. Weprin. "The community will benefit from having a cleaner, neater site."

The two 250,000 gallon capacity tanks were built in 1930 by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company on behalf of the former Jamaica Water Supply Company. The tanks were originally used to store water and maintain pressure in the distribution system. DEP assumed control of the tanks upon the purchase the Queens portion of the company in 1996. Since then, DEP has replaced and upgraded water mains in Southeast Queens to improve distribution and water quality. For example, a network of 20-inch mains was installed in the last 10 years in the surrounding community and large numbers of outdated fire hydrants were replaced with standard ones to enhance the fire fighting ability of the system. Several other projects are currently under construction, including over three miles of a 48-inch water main in Jamaica and Hollis. Due to investments like these over the years, the tanks have been obsolete for more than a decade.

DEP awarded the demolition contract to Terrasan Environmental Solution, Inc., which has already started preparing the worksite to start dismantling tank #9, located at 93-02 199 Street, in Hollis, and then proceed with tank #8 located at 84-02 164 Street, in Jamaica Hill. To demolish the more than 100-foot-high structure, crews will cut portions of the tanks and lower them by crane piece by piece.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 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 7,400 miles of sewer lines take wastewater to 14 in-City treatment plants. DEP also manages storm water throughout the City, and is responsible for ensuring that the City's facilities meet water quality standards.