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## City Announces Innovative New Partnerships That Will Reduce the Amount of Organic Waste Sent to Landfills, Produce a Reliable Source of Clean Energy and Improve Air Quality

**One of the Nation's First Biogas to Local Natural Gas Distribution Projects at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Will Produce Enough Renewable Natural Gas to Heat 5,200 New York City Homes**

**Pre-processed Organic Food Waste Will Be Used to Create Additional Biogas for Conversion to Renewable Natural Gas**

**Projects Contribute Towards Key PlaNYC Goals by Diverting Solid Waste from Landfills, Supporting Renewable Energy Development, and Reducing Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 90,000 Metric Tons**

Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway, Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland, and Sanitation Commissioner John Doherty today announced two new partnerships that will reduce the amount of organic waste sent to landfills, produce a reliable source of clean energy, and improve air quality. Waste Management has begun delivering pre-processed organic food waste to the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant where it is added to wastewater sludge to increase the production of biogas. In addition, a first-of-its kind project with National Grid will convert the biogas by-product into pipeline quality renewable natural gas for residential and commercial use. Together, these projects have the potential to produce enough energy to heat nearly 5,200 New

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York City homes, reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by more than 90,000 metric tons - the equivalent of removing nearly 19,000 cars from the road- and help City government reach its PlaNYC goal of reducing municipal greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2017. The announcement was made at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, with the Director of the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability Sergej Mahnovski, National Grid – NY President Ken Daly and Waste Management Area Vice President Tara Hemmer.

"This first-of-its kind renewable energy project will harness part of the 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater that New Yorkers generate every day," said Deputy Mayor Holloway. "The public-private partnership that made this possible will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of removing nearly 19,000 cars from City streets--a huge step towards making a greener, greater New York City. I want to thank Ken Daly and his team at national grid, and the State Public Service Commission for working with us to make this happen."

"Collecting and treating the more than one billion gallons of wastewater produced in New York City every day is essential to public health and the protection of the environment, but it also offers a significant opportunity to mine the resources in that waste stream for clean, reliable energy," said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Strickland. "At no cost to ratepayers, these projects will harness a byproduct of the wastewater treatment process to provide renewable natural gas to local residents while helping to clean the air we all breathe."

"These projects are terrific examples of how New York City is the test bed for bold ideas in clean energy and developing renewable biogas at Newtown Creek will serve as a blueprint for the type of transformative, sector-crossing projects needed to improve our air emissions and meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets," said Sergej Mahnovski, Director of the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability. "The projects will also act as a catalyst for developing new markets and technology for the resources recovered, both here in New York City and elsewhere."

"By deploying a robust organics program, DSNY is creating an opportunity for DEP to convert organic waste, that NYC used to spend millions of dollars to send to out of state landfills, into clean renewable energy right here in New York City," said Sanitation Commissioner John J. Doherty.

"For more than a century National Grid has provided the local Brooklyn community with clean burning economical natural gas. We are committed to delivering a low-carbon, sustainable energy future and we are proud to partner with DEP in this first-of-its kind project to demonstrate that renewable gas is a viable option to achieve this vision," said National Grid New York President Daly. "We are doing our part to help develop environmentally friendly energy technologies to minimize the effects of climate change on our communities. In partnership with New York City we have been able to make our communities stronger through the Clean Heat Initiative, the Brooklyn/Queens Interconnect project, Energy Tech High School and now Newtown Creek Renewable Gas Demonstration Project."

"Waste Management is focused every day on helping our customers extract more value from the waste stream," said Tara Hemmer, Area Vice President – Greater Mid Atlantic, Waste Management. "To support this pilot program, we have established one of New York City's first non-composting organics recycling facilities, which is designed to convert food waste into a clean, renewable energy source. This initiative marks a significant step forward toward achieving the City's long- term sustainability goals of recycling organic waste and increasing the use of renewable energy."

"Through this creative public/private partnership, the City of New York, National Grid, and Wastewater Management have demonstrated what a pathway to greater grid efficiency and reliability can look like," said Richard Kauffman, Chairman of Energy and Finance for New York State. "As New York State transitions to a cleaner energy economy, innovative local solutions like this will

be critical to ensuring that communities receive the clean power they need and deserve.”

"Recovering energy from solid waste is a smart and sustainable way to ensure electricity needs are met while benefiting the environment," New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens said. "DEC oversaw the regulatory review of this project to ensure community impacts are minimal and that environmental justice concerns are addressed. The potential to create renewable energy and reduce harmful greenhouse gases is a win-win for New Yorkers."

"Finding new ways to keep organics out of landfills and to generate clean biogas are 21st century waste management strategies that make perfect sense. We welcome the Bloomberg Administration's latest such initiative and are rooting for this innovative approach to succeed in all of its worthy objectives," said Eric A. Goldstein, New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"This is a really exciting development," said Marcia Bystryn, president of the New York League of Conservation Voters. "The best part is that the city is addressing multiple environmental challenges – air quality, renewable energy and organic waste – at the same time. We applaud Deputy Mayor Holloway, Commissioner Strickland, Waste Management and National Grid for collaborating on this effort, and we hope it can serve as a model for more innovative environmental projects around the city."

"Converting food waste to biogas allows us to use a local, urban energy source we'd otherwise throw away and helps reduce the need for fossil fuels," said Andy Darrell, Environmental Defense Fund's New York regional director. "This could be a model for locally produced energy in other cities."

"Reducing the amount of organic waste sent to landfills, producing clean energy, and improving air quality is a win-win-win situation for the community," said City Council Member Stephen Levin. "These are exciting new partnerships that will benefit Brooklyn in multiple ways."

Biogas, which is mostly methane, is a by-product of the wastewater treatment process. Methane is also the main component of natural gas. DEP currently reuses approximately 40 percent of the biogas produced at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the new partnership with National Grid will ensure that 100 percent of it goes to beneficial reuses and does not contribute to greenhouse gas emissions from the plant. National Grid will finance the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the biogas purification system and initially DEP will provide the biogas free of charge. Once project costs have been recouped, profits will be split between DEP and National Grid's customers. Construction of the purification system will begin in 2014 and is expected to be completed in 2015.

Over the summer of 2013, Waste Management's Varick I transfer facility in Brooklyn began processing organic food waste collected from local schools into a liquefied feedstock using the company's proprietary Centralized Organic Recycling equipment (CORE)SM process. The feedstock is delivered in sealed tankers to the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant where it is added to wastewater sludge to produce additional biogas. Waste Management is currently processing 2 tons per day of organic waste at the Varick I facility and plans to increase its volume to 5 to 10 tons per day during the initial pilot phase, with the potential to raise capacity to 250 tons per day over the next three years. If the pilot proves successful, there is the potential to process up to 500 tons of organic food waste per day at the Newtown Creek Plant.

Taken together, the initiatives have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 90,000 metric tons a year. Of this reduction, 54,500 tons will come from diverting the approximately 153,000 tons of organic waste from landfills, 32,400 tons will come from using the biogas, a renewable energy source, and offsetting emissions from traditional means of harvesting the natural

gas, 2,290 tons from reducing the 2.1 million miles of truck trips, and 840 tons from diverting the excess biogas from the flare at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

In the past several years, the City has pursued a portfolio of initiatives to increase in-city renewable energy, improve air quality, and divert solid waste from landfills, as outlined inPlaNYC, Mayor Bloomberg's sustainability blueprint. The City is more than halfway towards achieving its goal of a 30 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions citywide by 2030, and from City government operations by 2017.

Natural gas is cleaner than many other fuel sources, and renewable natural gas production can further improve New York City's air quality. These projects build upon other initiatives that have helped New York City's air quality reach the cleanest levels in more than 50 years. Since 2008, the levels of sulfur dioxide in the air have dropped by 69 percent and since 2007 the level of soot pollution has dropped by 23 percent. The cleaner air enjoyed by New Yorkers today is preventing 800 deaths and 2,000 emergency room visits and hospitalizations from lung and cardiovascular diseases annually, compared to 2008.

DEP operates 14 wastewater treatment plants throughout the city that clean and disinfect more than 1 billion gallons of wastewater to Federal Clean Water Act standards every day. At the plants, the wastewater undergoes five major physical and biological processes that closely duplicate how water is purified in nature. One of the byproducts of these processes is sludge. The Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant has eight digester eggs where the sludge is placed in an oxygen-free environment and is heated to at least 95 degrees Fahrenheit for between 15 to 20 days. This stimulates the growth of anaerobic bacteria, which consume the organic material in the sludge. The digestion process stabilizes the thickened sludge by converting much of the material into water, carbon dioxide and biogas.

Each year, the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant produces more than 500 million cubic feet of biogas. Of this, approximately 40 percent is reused in boilers that provide heat for plant buildings and the digester eggs. The excess biogas is flared into the atmosphere. Under the new partnership, National Grid will purify the approximately 60 percent of excess biogas to pipeline quality renewable natural gas on-site, and inject it into the local distribution network to heat residential and commercial properties.

The Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant is located in Brooklyn's Greenpoint neighborhood, and with a capacity to treat 330 million gallons of wastewater each day it is the largest plant in the city. The plant was originally built in 1967 and is currently in the final stages of a multi-year, \$5 billion upgrade. It accepts wastewater from more than 1 million residents across portions of southern and eastern Manhattan, western Queens, and northern Brooklyn.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from DEP facilities and beneficially reusing the biogas by-product of the wastewater treatment process are two of the sustainability goals outlined in Strategy 2011-2014, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to make DEP the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation. DEP already reuses the biogas byproduct, either in boilers or for powering equipment, at 13 of its 14 treatment plants and is designing facilities to use an even higher percentage, which will help to further reduce emissions and cut electricity costs.

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](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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