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## Fall Foliage

Schoharie Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

04-42

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Contact: Natalie Millner (718) 595-6600

## DEP Issues Advisory to Homeowners in Greenpoint Section of Brooklyn to Beware of Imposters Posing As "Water Department" Employees

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) cautioned residents of Greenpoint, Brooklyn that imposters posing as DEP or "Water Department" employees have been attempting to gain access to homes by claiming they need to check water pressure or read water meters. The 94th police precinct informed DEP that these imposters had been allowed into a home where they stole valuables from a 76 year old resident.

"These people are not employees of DEP or its contractors," said Commissioner Christopher O. Ward. "Accordingly, we have outlined precautions that citizens should take to protect themselves from impostors who claim they need to inspect leaks, water pressure, water quality, water meters or plumbing equipment."

DEP employees who are authorized to enter homes must carry and show photo I.D. cards and badges. Since impostors or others seeking access may have some form of identification, it is important to make sure that the I.D. card is from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. If you are unsure or do not have a specific appointment, you may confirm entry to your home by calling (718) 595-6600 to confirm.

### Important Facts for Homeowners

- ▶ Most water meters are read remotely from outside the home. DEP water use inspectors, however, may seek access without appointments for certain assignments, such as meter reading (if there is no remote or it does not work) and inspecting installations or repairs performed by DEP contractors.
- ▶ DEP water use inspectors wear uniforms and carry photo I.D. cards. Con Edison workers, who read water meters for DEP in all five boroughs, also wear uniforms and carry identification.

### MORE INFORMATION

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- ▶ In some emergency situations, material spills or leaks in water and sewer systems, DEP may need to gain access to buildings or homes to determine the source of a leak. They do not always wear uniforms. If you do not have an appointment and want to confirm that DEP needs access to your home, call (718) 595-6600. DEP employees who respond to emergency situations, such as hazardous materials also must carry and present photo I.D. cards whenever requesting access to a residence or building.
- ▶ Contractors installing water meters usually, but not always, make appointments in advance, wear uniforms, carry photo I.D cards, and drive trucks bearing company identification.
- ▶ DEP air and noise inspectors and water quality investigators do not wear uniforms, but they must carry and present photo I.D. cards and DEP inspector badges. When doing tests in buildings and homes at the request of citizens, they normally make appointments in advance.
- ▶ No DEP employee is ever authorized to ask for cash money to perform any service or for payment of past due bills.

If citizens believe that persons are misrepresenting themselves as DEP employees, they should phone the 94th Police Precinct or the City's 24-hour citizen service line at 311.