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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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July 12, 2010

**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSIONER HOLLOWAY LAUNCH REAL-TIME ONLINE WATER USE TRACKING FOR HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESSES**
***Water Customers Can Conserve Water and Save Money by Managing Usage More Efficiently and Quickly Detecting Water Leaks***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and [Environmental Protection](#) Commissioner Cas Holloway today launched a new system for real-time, online water use and bill tracking for homeowners and businesses. The new system will allow water customers to analyze their water use, and identify ways to conserve water, reduce water bills and detect leaks. The launch of the online tool is the latest component of the citywide conversion to Automated Meter Reading - wireless water meters that transmit water consumption data at least four times per day, ending the use of estimated water bills and giving water customers more accurate and timely records of water usage. The Mayor announced the start of installation of the wireless water meters in March of 2009 and more than 380,000 units have already been installed - 46 percent of the City's 834,000 water customers. Customers with wireless water meters using the online tracking tool will be able to see the dollar value of the water they have used as they use it, and view past billing and payment history. The online tracking tool will be phased in by borough, starting with the Bronx where customers that have wireless water meters can begin tracking water usage online today by going to [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov). The Mayor also was joined by Deputy Mayor for Operations Stephen Goldsmith and Council Member James F. Gennaro in the Blue Room of City Hall to announce the launch of the program.

"Since the first days of our Administration, we've worked hard to bring the power of new technology to City government to streamline the delivery of services, improve customer service and make government more accessible, transparent and accountable," said Mayor Bloomberg. "By providing homeowners and business with real-time access to their water bills, we've giving New Yorkers access to information they've never had before, so they can analyze their water consumption and target savings."

"We are focused on continually searching for ways to employ new technologies that enable citizens to receive better services from their government," said Deputy Mayor Goldsmith. "When citizens have access to information, they can communicate with City agencies effectively, helping to identify problems and speed

resolution."

"The ability of our customers to track how much water they use through wireless meter reading technology will significantly improve customer service for homeowners, businesses and buildings throughout the City," said Commissioner Holloway. "By providing information faster and more accurately, we're giving our customers the tools they need to make smart decisions about their water consumption. When people know more, they can save more, and this new tool will also help individuals detect leaks more quickly, which will save time and money. Customer service is our top priority, and Automated Meter Reading is a giant step forward for the City and for the 834,000 water customers who make it possible to operate, maintain, and build our water and sewer system."

"The Automated Meter Reading technology is a boon to water conservation across the City," said Council Member Gennaro, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection. "In this rough economy, this technology is clearly something that makes both sense and cents. I applauded Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Cas Holloway for implementing this environmentally savvy technology and making it available to New Yorkers."

Water customers in the remaining boroughs with wireless water meters will be able to track water usage online on a rolling basis: Queens starting on July 26th; Brooklyn starting on August 9th; Manhattan starting on August 23rd and Staten Island starting on September 7th. All water customers in New York City are expected to have wireless meters - and real-time, online access to their water bills - by January 2012, with between 7,000 and 9,000 customers added to the network each week. New York City will be the largest City in the world to utilize wireless water meters citywide once installation is completed. To see installation schedules throughout the city and an explanation of the free installation process visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).

Most customers connected to the wireless network receive meter readings four times per day, with certain large buildings receiving information hourly. Information on usage will be available by day, week, month, year, and billing period, with the ability for the customer to compare usage during those time frames.

The wireless Automated Meter Reading system consists of small, low-power radio transmitters connected to individual water meters that send readings every six hours to a network of rooftop receivers throughout the City. The total cost of citywide installation is \$252 million. New York City will be the largest city in the world to use wireless water metering.

The wireless system reduces costs for City government by eliminating the need for a meter reading contract that costs the City more than \$3.6 million a year. It is also increasing water bill collection rates, as the more accurate bills lead to fewer disputes and more bills being paid sooner.

The meter reading receivers are part of the New York City Wireless Network, administered by Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

The City's *PlaNYC* long-term sustainability goals will be bolstered through the use of wireless readers and online tracking by promoting water conservation and providing City government with better data for use in conservation and system planning initiatives.

The Bloomberg Administration has made a larger commitment to maintaining and improving the City's water system than any administration in City history. More than \$21 billion has been

committed to water system capital projects, including:

- \$2.5 billion for the City's Third Water Tunnel - more funding for the tunnel than the previous five administrations combined;
- Acquisition of nearly 70,000 acres of land upstate to protect the City's watershed; New York City is one of only five large cities in the country to obtain the majority of its water from unfiltered sources; and
- \$5 billion for upgrading the City's 14 wastewater treatment plants and a nearly \$1 billion commitment to reduce combined sewer overflows, which has helped bring harbor water quality to an all-time high since testing began 100 years ago and allowed wastewater treatment plants to meet the Federal Clean Water Act's secondary treatment standards for the first time ever.

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