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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

05-46

October 31, 2005

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Construction of City Tunnel No. 3 Approaches Milestones Ensuring Improved Water Delivery and Quality For New Yorkers**DEP commences a 2 to 3 month blasting project to construct shafts and chambers in 3 Manhattan locations**

DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd announced today that progress is being made on Tunnel No. 3 construction, and in particular, on the Manhattan section that runs from the far west side of Manhattan to the Holland Tunnel and curves around north to the lower east side. Construction of the Manhattan leg of the tunnel began in October 2003.

"We are entering a phase that requires DEP to construct several shafts and chambers along an underground portion of the Manhattan section of the tunnel," said Commissioner Lloyd. "Shafts serve as conduits for tunnel water to be delivered to local distribution mains," continued the Commissioner. "The shaft sites are located on East 4th Street between Lafayette Street and Cooper Square; at Hudson and Laight Streets; and Amsterdam Avenue and West 60th Street. It will be necessary to do some initial blasting at these locations."

Tunnel No. 3 is one of the largest and most complex capital construction projects in New York City history and has often been referred to as one of the world's engineering marvels.

Since 1998 and the completion of Stage 1 of the Tunnel, it has been delivering water through the Bronx, down Manhattan across Central Park and into Astoria Queens. By 2009 the Brooklyn/Queens leg will be activated, and it is expected that the lower Manhattan portion will begin delivering water by 2012. The capacity of these three legs will provide drinking water from Tunnel No. 3 to parts of all of the City's five boroughs, forming a firm backup to the water supply system. When the tunnel is completed in 2020, it will ensure the dependability of the City's drinking water supply well into the next Century.

"This is one of our City's most significant public works projects," said Commissioner Lloyd. "We have been able to greatly accelerate the time frame by using a tunnel boring machine for excavation. It is a massive piece of machinery that is lowered into the tunnel piece by piece and chips away at the bedrock through the continuous rotation of a

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series of steel cutters, thereby excavating the tunnel in a safer and faster way than ever before. "

Commissioner Lloyd pointed out that "despite our use of modern-day equipment certain production methods remain standard in construction projects, and in order to enlarge the shaft to its desired diameter, drill-and-blast procedure must still be used. When a shaft is completed, it is closed and covered, and becomes become part of the streetscape."

In an effort to be a good neighbor DEP notifies local residents and community boards prior to blasting; places ads in local papers in advance of blasting, and uses the safest and most modern blasting methods available.

Commissioner Lloyd went on to say that, "We do understand that the blasting can still be disruptive for local residents, and we do our best to keep it to a minimum. We ask the public for your patience as we work to continue bringing you the safe and reliable drinking water you currently enjoy."