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Contact:  
[deppressoffice@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:deppressoffice@dep.nyc.gov), (845) 334-7868

## Department of Environmental Protection

## Update on Response to Sheen at Schoharie Reservoir

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Friday provided the following update on its investigation and response to the surface sheen at Schoharie Reservoir:

After the sheen was discovered along the shore on Monday, water supply operators quickly shut down the Shandaken Tunnel Intake Chamber and surrounded the intake with absorbent boom. An analysis of water samples taken from the sheen determined that the material was motor oil or hydraulic oil. Oil was not found in the water samples collected from inside the intake chamber.

The sheen, which had dissipated by Tuesday, is not currently visible, nor are any odors detectable at the site. Three layers of boom remain deployed at the intake, and two layers of boom remain in place as a precaution at the tunnel outlet alongside the Esopus Creek.

On Thursday evening, DEP reactivated the Shandaken Tunnel Intake Chamber after consulting with its regulators. Local elected officials and stakeholders have also been notified. Because any lingering oil would remain in suspension atop the water, and the intake structure is located at the bottom of the reservoir, DEP is confident that none of the material will be conveyed through the Shandaken Tunnel. In addition to absorbent boom already deployed at both ends of the tunnel, DEP is taking several other steps that have been reviewed by regulators.

DEP's water quality staff will implement an enhanced monitoring plan at the Shandaken Tunnel intake and outlet. Samples will be taken Friday, Sunday, Tuesday, and then once a week to ensure oil is absent from the water being conveyed from Schoharie Reservoir. This monitoring plan is consistent with the testing that was done after a similar sheen was discovered at Pepacton Reservoir in 2012. DEP will also conduct daily visual inspections at Schoharie Reservoir and the Shandaken Tunnel Outlet for any sign of the sheen. Coincident with these actions, DEP is working on a plan to remove the tank once the ice has melted and work conditions are safe.

Because the Shandaken Tunnel had been shut down for several days, its reactivation on Thursday evening created a brief spike in turbidity that soon returned to normal levels. DEP is currently conveying 300 million gallons per day through the tunnel.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend

More Information

NYC Department of Environmental Protection  
Public Affairs  
59-17 Junction Boulevard  
19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Flushing, NY 11373  
(718) 595-6600

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/press\\_releases/15-024pr.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/press_releases/15-024pr.shtml)[4/17/2015 9:08:35 AM]

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more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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