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## Department of Environmental Protection, Senator Leroy Comrie, Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman and Council Member I. Daneek Miller Distribute Rain Barrels to 240 Homeowners in Southeast Queens

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### Rain Barrels Collect Precipitation, Reduce Residential Water Bills and Help to Protect the Health of Jamaica Bay

Photos of the Event are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Saturday joined New York State Senator Leroy Comrie, Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman and Council Member I. Daneek Miller to distribute rain barrels to approximately 240 homeowners in the St. Albans, Cambria Heights, Rosedale and Laurelton neighborhoods. The 60-gallon rain barrels are easy to install and connect directly to a property owner's downspout to capture and store the stormwater that falls on the rooftop. The water collected in the rain barrel can then be used to water lawns and gardens, or for other outdoor chores. Rain barrels can help reduce a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months. They also help to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the City's sewer system, which helps to protect the health of local waterways, including Jamaica Bay. Over the last several years, DEP has distributed more than 4,000 rain barrels to New York City homeowners. Saturday's event was held at Roy Wilkins Park in Jamaica and the rain barrels were provided free of charge.

"We began the rain barrel giveaway program in southeast Queens and it remains a popular way for homeowners to sustainably take care of outdoor chores while reducing their water bills," said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. "In addition, every drop of rain collected in the barrels helps to reduce flooding while also protecting the health of nearby Jamaica Bay."

"I'd like to thank Commissioner Lloyd, Karen Ellis and the DEP staff for working collaboratively with my office to provide this important, practical resource to southeast Queens," said **Senator Leroy Comrie**. "I would also like to thank the Southern Queens Park Association, Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman, and

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Councilman I. Daneek Miller for co-sponsoring the event, as well as the NYPD Explorers and all of the volunteers. This is a critical resource that will provide help to homeowners and serve to curb flooding issues. To find out about our next DEP rain barrel event in your area, please visit my [Facebook page](#)."

"This is a great event for the community and highlights different ways in which we can improve the environment," said **Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman**. "Using rainwater for gardening is a good cost cutting measure for homeowners."

"As summer approaches, DEP's rain barrel program continues to be a popular event for residents in Southeast Queens," said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller**. "The rain barrels are an effective way for homeowners to be environmentally conscious while also saving them money on their water bill. I would like to thank Commissioner Emily Lloyd, Senator Leroy Comrie, Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman, and the Southern Queens Park Association, for once again supporting this program."

DEP's Rain Barrel Giveaway Program is part of New York City's Green Infrastructure Plan that aims to capture stormwater before it can ever enter the sewer system and thereby reduce combined sewer overflows into local waterways. DEP has committed to invest \$2.4 billion in green infrastructure projects as well as other source controls, such as rain barrels, to significantly reduce combined sewer overflows by 2030.

The rain barrel program also builds upon DEP's efforts to conserve water as part of a \$1.5 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for more than nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. As part of this initiative, DEP has begun a project to repair leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct that supplies roughly half of the city's daily drinking water. In order to complete these repairs to the Aqueduct, the tunnel must be temporarily shut down in 2022. Ahead of the planned shutdown, DEP aims to reduce citywide water consumption by five percent.

In addition to encouraging homeowners to conserve water, DEP is installing activation buttons on spray showers at 400 playgrounds around the city that will save 1.5 million gallons of water a day during the summer months. Work is also underway to install new, high efficiency fixtures in the bathrooms of 500 City schools to reduce water consumption by nearly 4 million gallons each school day. And, DEP has partnered with hotels, restaurants and hospitals across the city to reduce water use at these facilities by five percent annually.

Installation of rain barrels is easy and they require little maintenance. Each homeowner who received a rain barrel was provided with an installation kit and instructions. Rain barrels should only be used for non-potable purposes, such as gardening, and must be disconnected from the downspout during the winter months to avoid freezing.

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. 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. 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](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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