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Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Michael Saucier / Mercedes Padilla (718) 595-6600

MORE INFORMATION

NYC Department of Environmental Protection
Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373

(718) 595 - 6600

NYC DEP Begins Enforcement Actions on Delinquent Water and Sewer Accounts

94 Percent of Delinquent Customers Paid Before Service Termination

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that it has started service terminations to residential properties for non-payment of water and sewer bills. Of 93 properties identified over the last several weeks for service termination, only 5 were terminated; 94% paid or entered into a payment agreement before service was actually terminated. In addition, 1 property owner took advantage of DEP's newly created Safety Net Referral Program, which provides help to seniors, those affected by the nationwide predatory lending, mortgage and foreclosure crisis, and others having difficulty paying their bills.

"These early results of the use of service termination as an enforcement tool demonstrate that stronger enforcement is a crucial tool. The vast majority of New Yorkers pay their water bills, but there have been some who have not paid because they haven't believed there would be consequences," said Commissioner Emily Lloyd. "That will not be the case going forward. We also want to remind all of our customers who are eligible for the Payment Incentive Program to take advantage of this one-time offer and save money on their water bills."

The service terminations come after months of notifications of an offer for customers to enroll in an unprecedented Payment Incentive Program for single-family home customers owing \$1,000 or more for one year or longer. The program removed 100% of late payment charges, capped utility charges at \$2 per day, and resulted in a more than 40% discount to most customers.

Over the past 6 months, DEP has sent these customers 13 reminder notices, worked with City Council members to co-host 16 outreach events Citywide with live customer service support, called them numerous times and advertised extensively via radio, cable and newspapers, and in subway stations and bus shelters and on subway cars. Customers who have not taken advantage of the incentive offer are eligible for service termination.

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Between March 10 and March 17, DEP mailed out 93 15-Day Service Termination Notices and posted each of the properties with a Service Termination Notice. DEP also marked sidewalks of properties where service termination was to occur. 94% of customers eligible for service termination who were issued the notices settled their debt as of today. Of those, 66% have made payments in full and 34% have entered into a payment agreement.