

[Home](#)
Customer Services

- › [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- › [Account Information](#)
- › [Customer Assistance](#)
- › [Service Line Protection Program](#)
- › [Water Rates](#)
- › [Property Managers & Trade Professionals](#)

Water Utilities

- › [Drinking Water](#)
- › [Wastewater](#)
- › [Stormwater](#)
- › [Harbor Water](#)
- › [Long Term Control Plan](#)

The Watershed

- › [Watershed Protection](#)
- › [Watershed Recreation](#)

Citywide Initiatives

- › [Regulatory Reform](#)
- › [Environmental Education](#)
- › [Conservation Programs](#)
- › [Air Pollution Control](#)
- › [Noise Codes & Complaints](#)

Business and Professionals

- › [Forms & Permits](#)
- › [Economic Development Unit](#)
- › [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- › [Asbestos Abatement](#)
- › [Construction, Demolition & Abatement](#)

About DEP

- › [Inside DEP](#)
- › [News](#)
- DEP Featured In...
- Stories from DEP
- Press Releases
- Public Notices
- Testimony & Public Comments

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 14-17

March 17, 2014

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Department of Environmental Protection Announces Second Year of Pilot Program for Fishing with Electric Trolling Motors at Cannonsville Reservoir

Informational Meeting on Pilot Program to be Held March 20 at Tompkins Town Hall

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that it will continue the pilot program that allows the use of electric trolling motors for fishing at Cannonsville Reservoir. DEP will renew the program in 2014 at Cannonsville Reservoir only after consulting with watershed stakeholders and carefully considering issues that arose during the first year of the pilot. 2013 marked the first time that motorized boats were allowed on any of DEP's upstate reservoirs. The boats and their electric motors were required to be steam cleaned before they entered the reservoir to help eradicate invasive animals, plants and microorganisms from the boat and its motor. If introduced into the water supply, invasive species can harm water quality, clog intake pipes, and have other detrimental effects to the ecosystem.

During the first year of the pilot program, DEP issued 112 trolling motor tags to fishermen from New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. The popularity of the program also highlighted some challenges that DEP and its partners will seek to address in 2014. With consensus from program stakeholders, this year DEP and certified steam cleaning vendors will only issue two-day trolling motor tags. This will allow fishermen to use their electric trolling motor for two consecutive days, before it must be removed from the reservoir. If it is to be used again, the trolling motor must be steam cleaned and a new tag will be issued. This change will not affect tags that are issued for fishing boats that do not use a motor, nor will it affect tags for recreational boating at other reservoirs in the water supply system. DEP will host an information meeting on March 20 at Tompkins Town Hall on Bridge Street in Trout Creek to discuss results from the first year of the pilot program and provide more information about the upcoming year. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m.

"DEP wants to see the trolling motor program succeed, and that's why we will continue to work with program stakeholders to ensure the cleanliness of every boat and motor that is used at Cannonsville Reservoir," said DEP Deputy Commissioner Paul Rush.

DEP's recreational boating program—which permits the use of kayaks, canoes, and other recreational boats—started with a three-year pilot at Cannonsville Reservoir before expanding to include Pepacton, Neversink and Schoharie reservoirs.

The electric trolling motor program begins April 1, or once the reservoirs are ice-free, and ends Nov. 30. Boats and their motors must be steam cleaned by a

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- › [Capital Projects](#)
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- › [Environmental Reviews](#)
- › [Interagency MOUs](#)
- › [A to Z Index](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)



certified vendor before they are used in the reservoir. Vendors will issue a trolling motor tag after the boat is cleaned. A free-of-charge DEP access permit is required for anyone boating and/or fishing on City reservoirs.

To be eligible for the program, electric trolling motors must not exceed 55 pounds of thrust, and their batteries cannot exceed 12 volts. The motors must use marine-grade batteries that are sealed, and they must be affixed to the boat to prevent them from falling into the reservoir. Trolling motors are to be used only for fishing, and only with row boats or jon boats. While the trolling motors may be stored along with the boats at each reservoir, batteries must be removed at the end of each day.

New York State navigation laws will also apply, including the requirement that users have a whistle, a hand lantern, and an anchor on board.

Information about this and other boating programs on City reservoirs can be found by [clicking here](#). A link to receive a free DEP access permit is also found at that site.

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 residents, including 8.4 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam, and Westchester counties. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP employs nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and others professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$68 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.5 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 over \$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, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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