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Fall Foliage

Peapack Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEP Recommends Steps For Homeowners to Ensure Proper Identification of Employees

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has learned that two men, claiming to be from the "water department" and needing to investigate a leak, have stolen money and articles from at least one home in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.

"These people are not employees of DEP or its contractors," said DEP Commissioner Christopher O. Ward. "They are impostors preying on senior citizens. Accordingly, we have outlined precautions that citizens should take to protect themselves from impostors who claim they need to inspect water quality, water meters or plumbing equipment."

DEP employees authorized to enter homes must carry and show photo I.D. cards and badges. Since impostors or others seeking access may have some form of identification, it is important to make sure that the I.D. card is from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

- ▶ Con Edison workers read water meters for DEP throughout the City. Most water meters are read remotely from outside the home. DEP's water use inspectors, however, may seek access without appointments for certain assignments, such as checking up on meter readings (if there is no remote or it does not work) and inspecting installations or repairs performed by DEP contractors.
- ▶ DEP water use inspectors wear uniforms and carry Photo I.D. cards. Con Edison workers also wear uniforms.
- ▶ Contractors installing water meters usually, but not always, make appointments in advance, wear uniforms, carry photo IDs and drive trucks bearing company identification.
- ▶ DEP air and noise inspectors and water quality investigators do not wear uniforms, but they must carry and present photo I.D. cards and DEP inspector badges.

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When doing tests in buildings and homes at the request of citizens, they normally make appointments in advance.

- ▶ DEP employees who respond to emergency situations, such as hazardous material spills or leaks in water and sewer systems may need to gain access to buildings or homes to determine the source of a leak. They do not wear uniforms, but must carry and present photo I.D. cards whenever requesting access to a residence or building.
- ▶ No DEP employee is ever authorized to ask for cash money to perform any service or for payment of past due bills.

IF CITIZENS BELIEVE THAT PERSONS ARE MISREPRESENTING THEMSELVES AS DEP EMPLOYEES, THEY SHOULD PHONE THE LOCAL POLICE PRECINCT AND THE DEP HELP CENTER AT 718-DEP-HELP (718-337-4357).