

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TAKES STEPS  
TO PREPARE FOR MID-WEEK STORM**

As the recovery from Hurricane Sandy continues, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that steps were being taken to fortify its infrastructure in anticipation of a storm that is forecasted to hit the region on Wednesday. The City has activated the Flash Flood Emergency Plan and DEP crews are cleaning catch basins and flushing sewer lines of debris that was washed into the system during Hurricane Sandy. Crews are also working to prepare wastewater treatment plants for the additional flow of stormwater that will likely accompany the storm. DEP crews are focusing on low-lying and coastal areas throughout the five boroughs that are most prone to flooding.

- The Flash Flood Emergency Plan calls for the inspection and cleaning of catch basins at 250 flood prone locations around the city.
- Since Saturday crews have inspected more than 1,700 catch basins throughout the five boroughs and removed debris that could prevent stormwater from draining. Approximately 1,000 more will be inspected over the next 24 hours.
- Crews are using vactor trucks, large industrial sized vacuums with extendable hoses, to suck out debris that has accumulated in catch basins and sewer lines. In addition, DEP has begun deploying private contractor's vactor trucks to the field to aid in the preparation work.
- Trucks equipped with extendable grabber arms are removing debris from catch basins.
- Pump trucks are flushing debris from sewer lines.
- The largest sewer lines that feed into wastewater treatment plants are being cleaned to optimize sewer capacity and mitigate backups and flooding.

**On Staten Island:**

- Using two excavators and a front-end loader, crews have removed over 500 cubic yards of debris that had accumulated in Jefferson Creek and was impeding natural drainage. Repairs have also been completed to a tide gate which keeps seawater from entering the Creek.
- Crews are moving block by block and have cleaned over 100 catch basins and flushed sewer lines.
- A vactor truck is cleaning the large sewer line that feeds the Oakwood Beach Treatment Plant on the south shore to optimize capacity and mitigate back-ups.
- An additional vactor truck is cleaning the sewer line on Midland Avenue from Moreland Avenue to Father Capodano Boulevard.
- Crews continue to clean sewer lines on Hylan Boulevard, focusing on the Jefferson Avenue area that suffered heavy flooding during Hurricane Sandy.

- Crews are also cleaning catch basins on Father Capodano Boulevard from Seaview Avenue to Midland Avenue.

#### In the Rockaways:

- Sewer infrastructure was inundated with sand and debris and crews are working to clear the lines to allow for proper drainage.
- A vactor truck has been cleaning sewer lines block by block and is at Beach 122<sup>nd</sup> Street and Newport Avenue today.
- Crews are working with the Department of Sanitation to clear debris from streets and inspect water and sewer infrastructure.
- A survey of the coastline found that five sewer outfall locations were blocked with debris from Hurricane Sandy. The debris is being removed today to mitigate sewer back-ups.
- Crews have repaired 11 fire hydrants that were knocked off their moorings and dug out five that were buried in sand. All remaining hydrants in the Rockaways have been inspected.

#### Jamaica Estates:

- 12 DEP crews are assisting Con Ed by removing downed trees and limbs that have pulled down power lines. Yesterday, 30 trees were removed from a four block stretch of this neighborhood.

#### Brooklyn:

- Two vactor trucks are cleaning sewer lines in Seagate today.
- Crews are inspecting and cleaning catch basins in Coney Island, Sheepshead Bay, Gerritsen Beach and Manhattan Beach.

#### City-Wide Wastewater Treatment Plants:

- Ten of the City's 14 in-city wastewater treatment plants and more than 40 of the City's 96 sanitary pumping stations were damaged during Hurricane Sandy. DEP crews and contractors have worked around the clock so that all pumping stations and treatment plants are now operational and are handling all of the city's wastewater. More than 99% of the wastewater is receiving full secondary treatment and all plants have been restored to their pre-Hurricane Sandy wet weather capacity. Work will continue to prepare the plants for the expected additional flow of stormwater and sandbags are being placed around the plants to protect critical electrical equipment from a storm surge.

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