For More Information

If you have questions about the New York City water supply system or filtration, please write:

New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Communications and Intergovernmental Affairs
59-17 Junction Boulevard, Flushing, New York 11373-5108

You can also contact DEP by calling 311, the City's non-emergency government information and services hotline, or visit DEP's web site at:

www.nyc.gov/dep

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection manages the City's water supply, providing over 1.1 billion gallons of water each day to approximately 9 million residents throughout New York State via a complex network of nineteen reservoirs, three controlled lakes and 6,200 miles of water pipes, tunnels and aqueducts. DEP is also responsible for managing stormwater throughout the City and treating wastewater at 14 in-City wastewater treatment plants. Additionally, DEP carries out federal Clean Water Act rules and regulations, handles hazardous materials emergencies and toxic site remediation, oversees asbestos monitoring and removal, enforces the City's air and noise codes, bills and collects on City water and sewer accounts, and manages citywide water conservation programs. As part of the Mayor's PlaNYC agenda to balance infrastructure solutions with more sustainable "green" strategies, DEP is enhancing land acquisition and watershed protection programs, implementing innovative stormwater management techniques, such as best management practices (BMPs), and diversifying water supply system infrastructure.

New York City Department of
Environmental Protection

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Steven W. Lawitts, Acting Commissioner

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS OF THE NEW YORK CITY CROTON WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

(July 15, 2009)

Share this information with all of the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly

PLEASE POST THIS NOTICE IN A PROMINENT PLACE IN YOUR BUILDING OR DISTRIBUTE COPIES BY HAND

New York City Department of
Environmental Protection

Construction of the Croton Water Filtration Plant under Mosholu Golf Course

Important Information for Consumers of the New York City Croton Water Supply System

Protecting the Water Supply

Federal law and State regulations require that all New York State surface drinking water supply systems filter the water delivered to consumers, unless the system can meet strict conditions for "filtration avoidance," including protection of the related watershed from where the surface water originates. New York City obtains virtually all of its drinking water from three surface water systems originating in upstate watersheds – the Croton, Catskill and Delaware systems. Since the early 1990s, the City has pursued a comprehensive watershed protection strategy for these water systems to protect the quality of its drinking water at the source. Its program includes, among other things, enforcement of updated watershed rules and regulations, acquisition of sensitive watershed lands, and funding of economic and environmental partnerships with watershed counties, towns and villages to support local efforts aimed at maintaining or enhancing water quality.

In July of 2007, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) renewed its previous decision and issued a 10-year Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) for the City's two largest systems, the Catskill and the Delaware. However, the City, the State and USEPA have determined that the Croton system (supplying about 10% of the City's daily drinking water, and up to 30% in times of drought) should be filtered.

The Croton System
(Public Water System ID# NY7003666)

Croton system water is not currently filtered, which constitutes a treatment technique violation under federal and State drinking water regulations. Due to its unique history and geography (very different from both the Catskill and Delaware systems), the Croton system also experiences seasonal water quality problems associated with elevated color levels, resulting from naturally occurring minerals and organic matter present in the water. Although this condition is aesthetic and not health-related, it may require the City to periodically discontinue use of Croton system water. The Croton System has been off-line since December of 2008 and remains off-line.

Filtration

The City's goal is to ensure that Croton system water is at all times protected against microbiological contamination, is aesthetically pleasing, and meets all drinking water quality standards. The City, therefore, is constructing a filtration plant for Croton system water, pursuant to the terms of a November 1998 federal court Consent Decree, entered into with the United States and the State of New York. The facility is expected to reduce color levels in the Croton system water, reduce the risk of microbiological contamination, reduce disinfection by-product levels and ensure compliance with stricter water quality standards.

The Consent Decree, as modified in May 2002, required the City to evaluate and choose between three potential sites for the construction, operation and maintenance of a Croton water filtration plant -- two in the Bronx, and one in Westchester County. In July 2003, the Governor approved and signed into law the State Legislature's authorization of the alienation of the Mosholu Golf Course Site in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, as sought for by the City. A Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement comparing the three sites was released on June 30, 2004 and it identified the Mosholu Golf Course Site as the preferred site for the facility. On September 28, 2004, the City issued a notice to proceed with the first phase of construction of the filtration plant. On August 23, 2006 and on August 21, 2007 the second and third phases of construction went forward. Construction work at the site continues to make progress: excavation of the two Treated Water Tunnels has been completed; placement of concrete for lining the Raw Water Tunnel is underway; and concrete placement, installation of mechanical piping and electrical work at the site continue to advance. In addition, work off-site at the Treated Water Shafts at Jerome Park Reservoir continues.

The Law

Until the City begins to filter Croton water, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection is required to send to customers of the Croton Water Supply, the following information quarterly:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards and has determined that the presence of microbiological contaminants is a health concern at certain levels of exposure. If water is inadequately treated, microbiological contaminants in that water may cause disease. Disease symptoms may include diarrhea, cramps, nausea, and possibly jaundice, and any associated headaches and fatigue. These symptoms, however, are not just associated with disease-causing organisms in water, but also may be caused by a number of factors other than your drinking water. EPA has set enforceable requirements for treating drinking water to reduce the risk of these adverse health effects. Treatment such as filtering and disinfecting the water removes or destroys microbiological contaminants. Drinking water which is treated to meet EPA requirements is associated with little to none of this risk and should be considered safe.