

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Strategy	Progress to Date	Status
Goal: Provide the highest quality service to nine million New Yorkers, including our 836,000 bill-paying customers.		
3	Substantially complete the installation of Automated Meter Reading (AMR) devices citywide by January 2012 and continue to improve the online AMR tool.	As of March 2012 we have installed Automated Meter Reading (AMR) devices for 94% of our customers. AMR technology allows customers to track their water use by sending accurate meter readings to a computerized billing system up to four times a day. AMR is one of our most important customer service initiatives, almost single-handedly changing the way customers view, understand, and pay their water and sewer bills. By integrating AMR with our new online <i>My DEP Account</i> platform, we have allowed our customers to view and pay their bills online from the comfort of home. To date, more than 150,000 customers have registered their accounts online.
4	Develop a leak detection system for customers who want to know when their water use deviates from normal consumption patterns.	In 2011, DEP developed the Leak Notification Program, which alerts enrolled customers to costly leaks when their water consumption deviates from typical patterns. In 2012, we will expand this program to include large buildings and give property owners the ability to set their own triggers for notification. We will also integrate Leak Notification alerts with the upcoming <i>My DEP Account</i> smartphone application, offering New Yorkers the option to monitor their water use on the go.
5	Reduce call response time to 30 seconds or less.	In 2011, we upgraded our phone system to reduce caller wait times, and improved representative training to increase customer satisfaction. As a result, the average speed at which calls are answered has dropped by more than 50% in the last six months to 38 seconds.
6	Continue and expand programs for customers in financial distress.	In 2011, the Water Debt Assistance Program relieved more than 250 qualified customers who were at risk of mortgage foreclosure of past-due water and sewer debt. DEP is currently exploring new ways to expand the program in 2012.
7	Offer customers a service line protection plan.	Without proper coverage, if a customer's water or sewer line breaks, they could be responsible for thousands of dollars' worth of costly repairs. To reduce this financial risk, in 2012 we will offer rate-paying customers a Service Line Protection Plan. In December 2011, DEP released a Request for Proposals (RFP) and we will choose a winner by April 2012.
8	Promote NYC Water by building partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and other city agencies.	In 2011, we served water to more than 200,000 thirsty New Yorkers six days a week at fountain locations throughout the city. We will continue to expand <i>Water-On-the-Go</i> as a part of our education and outreach efforts, and will assess the success of a second full season to determine future opportunities to encourage more New Yorkers to drink NYC Water.
Goal: Ensure effective and fair revenue collection.		
9	Replace the DEP customer information data system and convert to monthly account billing.	We will complete the customer information data system by September 2012. Beginning January 1, 2012, all customers who enter into a payment agreement with DEP now receive monthly water and sewer bills.

10	Convert customers to paperless billing and specific online payment methods.	More than 38,000 customers have signed up for paperless billing. For customers that have not yet signed up, in 2012 all paper bills will feature a message about the advantages of <i>My DEP Account</i> and we will distribute brochures at outreach meetings.	Initiated 
11	Increase revenue collection with new collection tools and by targeting specific customer segments.	In 2011, DEP awarded a contract to a third-party collection agency to aggressively pursue select non-paying customers. In 2012, DEP will continue to explore new collection tools in an effort to boost our collection rate amongst customers who repeatedly refuse to pay for the water and sewer services they use.	Partially Achieved 
12	Renew and expand DEP's lien sale authority.	In 2011, DEP partnered with the City Council to reauthorize our lien sale authority through 2014 to keep water rates as low as possible and to ensure that all New Yorkers pay their fair share for water and sewer services.	Achieved and Ongoing 
13	Replace approximately 30,000 large meters on industry-recommended cycles over the next 10 years.	In January 2012, DEP included the large meter replacement project as an <i>OpX</i> initiative. The <i>OpX</i> team will identify and replace underperforming meters.	Initiated 
14	Evaluate new water rate structures.	In 2011, DEP piloted a new stormwater charge of \$0.05 per square foot for stand-alone parking lots that do not receive or pay for water service but that discharge stormwater to our sewers. We have also instituted a credit program to waive charges for lots that demonstrate the ability to effectively capture stormwater. Over the past year, DEP began analysis of the effectiveness of continuing frontage rates and the value of a new development charge and has considered introducing a fixed rate for a portion of annual water and sewer charges.	Initiated 
Goal: Encourage economic development by simplifying and improving permitting processes.			
15	Increase online permitting for businesses, engineers, and contractors.	In 2011, DEP moved several types of permits online, including water and sewer repair/relay, new sewer connections, and plug sewer permits. This online tool, called the Water and Sewer Permitting System, is accessible through <i>My DEP Account</i> and allows Licensed Master Plumbers to apply for and receive permit approvals without ever having to visit a DEP location. By moving these permitting processes online, we have reduced wait times from a few days to just under a few hours.	Partially Achieved 
16	Consolidate permitting functions to simplify customer interactions with DEP.	Last May, DEP and the Department of Buildings (DOB) announced a new simplified permitting process for converting boilers from high-sulfur residual fuel oil to cleaner fuels. Now, licensed boiler installers will be able to submit one form to both DEP and DOB to certify that fuel grade conversions were documented and the necessary work was properly performed without the need for more complex design submissions. The new simplified process will save building owners on average 80% of the upgrade design costs, approximately \$3,000 per boiler. Additionally, the joint-agency filing will speed up the permitting process, allowing permits to be obtained in days instead of weeks.	Initiated 
17	Update and improve DEP's air permitting database.	In February 2012, DEP moved boiler registration online. In 2012, we will add new online functionality, including the ability for building owners to obtain a Certificate to Operate.	Partially Achieved 
18	Publish an annual regulatory agenda.	In January 2012, DEP published a regulatory agenda which details forthcoming reforms to DEP-issued rules and requirements. Moving forward we will publish this regulatory agenda on our website on an annual basis.	Achieved and Ongoing 

19	Publish regulatory guidance manuals.	In 2011, DEP published the <i>Noise Code Guide</i> and the <i>Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Stormwater Management Systems</i> to help New Yorkers better understand and comply with DEP regulations. In 2012, we will develop and publish guidance materials for the automotive and hospitality industries.	Partially Achieved 
20	Simplify the reporting process for businesses and other entities that are required to report their hazardous substances to DEP.	The Community Right-to-Know Tier II Filing System (Tier II) is a web-based system that allows facilities to submit their annual chemical inventories online. In 2011, DEP upgraded Tier II to make the reporting process faster, easier, and more efficient for the hundreds of businesses that must file annual reports. A new feature allows businesses to amend their prior year's submission, saving them valuable time by eliminating redundancies. Business owners with multiple facilities can now submit a single certification letter for all their facilities. In order to assist businesses with the transition to online filing, we set up workstations at our headquarters in Queens and helped more than 80 businesses file their Tier II online.	Partially Achieved 