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## **NYSDEC Issues Permit to Improve Water Quality in NYC Waterways**

### ***Permit Conditions Will Better Control Stormwater Discharges from NYC's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System***

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today issued a permit to improve water quality and better control stormwater discharges from New York City's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4). The State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit for stormwater discharges from New York City's MS4 includes conditions to better manage urban sources of stormwater runoff and help protect and improve water quality as part of a comprehensive, integrated planning approach. DEC conducted a thorough review of the application, supporting materials and public comments before reaching its decision to issue the permit.

"Tighter controls on stormwater discharges will protect water quality and public health. This permit will help improve the quality of New York City's valued coastal resources and expand the vast recreational opportunities they provide," said DEC Acting Commissioner Marc Gerstman. "This permit has both short term and long term benefits, including a management plan that will act as a guide for the future. New York City Department of Environmental Protection should be commended for its collaborative work with DEC to achieve our mutual objectives. The permit reflects many of the substantive comments we received regarding this permit."

"With increased precipitation associated with climate change, stormwater management is one of our highest priorities," said DEP First Deputy Commissioner Steve Lawitts. "We share DEC's goal of improving stormwater management practices at both public and private properties and improving the health of our waterways."

Stormwater runoff occurs when rain or melting snow does not soak into the ground. The runoff collects and deposits contaminants such as oil, grease, sediment, litter, pesticides, fertilizers and animal waste into surface waters, impairing water quality. Because of its impact on the environment, stormwater discharges are regulated under the federal Clean Water Act and state Environmental Conservation Law.

This SPDES permit includes controls to address the various sources of pollutants and their means of entry into the MS4. Under the permit, New York City is required to develop a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) Plan.

Significant benefits that will be achieved under the permit include:

- public education and outreach to eliminate pollutants at their sources;
- an inspection and enforcement program to prevent pollutants from industrial facilities and construction sites;
- best management practices to reduce pollutants from post-construction stormwater runoff;
- improved programs to detect and eliminate illicit discharges and reduce the amount of garbage, litter, and other floatables;

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- best management practices to eliminate or reduce pollutants from New York City's municipal operations and facilities; and
- an improved program to assess and monitor stormwater discharges from storm sewers, customized to address specific waterbodies, impairments and pollutant sources.

The development and implementation of the SWMP components, required as part of the SPDES permit, will provide significant and meaningful reduction of pollutants entering storm sewers and being discharged from NYC's MS4 system due to stormwater runoff in urban areas.

The permit and other relevant documents are available on DEC's website at the following link: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102611.html>.

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