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United Water Fined for Excess Releases from Reservoir

Violations Centered on Management of Lake Deforest in Rockland County

West Nyack-based United Water New York has paid a \$10,000 fine to New York State to resolve violations regarding excess releases from the Lake Deforest Reservoir in Rockland County, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Pete Grannis announced today. An additional levy of \$7,500 has been suspended provided the company adheres to the terms of the agreement.

United Water operates the Lake Deforest Reservoir under a permit that requires the company to maintain a daily average flow of 9.75 million gallons of water per day in the stream immediately above the intake works of the Village of Nyack. DEC determined that United Water exceeded its permit limits by some 231 million gallons between June 1, 2007, and Sept. 22, 2007.

The settlement, or "consent order," signed by DEC and United Water, calls for the company to provide to its customers additional information on water conservation by the way of billing inserts in the spring and summer months and include a plan for wise use of water both indoors and out.

"This order is significant because not only does it require careful adherence to water supply permits but also it recognizes the important need for all New Yorkers to conserve water in their everyday lives," said Regional Director Willie Janeway. "We take water conservation issues seriously in New York, and this settlement will empower all United Water customers to join us in these efforts by providing timely and valuable information to residents each year."

The DEC acknowledged that United Water has worked cooperatively to address the excess releases. The company also has withheld authorized releases to make up for the excess releases, and completed the necessary infrastructure repairs to better control future releases.

Michael J. Pointing, vice president and general manager of United Water, said: "We acknowledge from the outset that inadvertent excess releases had been made. Upon learning of the excess, we commissioned an independent study and immediately took steps to make Rockland County customers whole. We have worked cooperatively with the DEC and take our commitment to the environment, regulators, and customers in Rockland County very seriously. I am pleased that these issues have been resolved. I credit Commissioner Grannis, Regional Director Janeway, and DEC staff for their fairness and professionalism throughout this process."