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Department of Environmental Protection Announces Initiatives to Further Improve Air Quality

Increasing the Efficiency of Large Building Boilers Will Result in Less Pollution and Build Upon the Progress that saw 2013 Register the Cleanest Air in New York City in the Last 50 Years

Boilers That Run More Efficiently Will Use Less Fuel and Reduce Costs for Building Owners

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd today announced a number of new initiatives, including a rule that increases how efficiently boilers in large buildings burn home heating oil and natural gas, which will reduce a significant source of pollution and result in cleaner air in New York City. The new rules will also require annual tune-ups and combustion efficiency tests to ensure the boilers meet the new criteria. By increasing an existing boilers burning efficiency from 80 to 83 percent, the New York State standard for new boilers, a building will use thousands of gallons less fuel every year and save tens of thousands of dollars in costs.

“This common sense rule will help reduce pollution, make our air cleaner and residents healthier, and reduce fuel costs for building owners,” said DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd. “By phasing out the use of the dirtiest heating oils and increasing the efficiency of boilers we will continue to build on the progress that has seen dramatic reductions in air pollution in New York City.”

“Air pollution is a serious public health issue in New York City, with young children, seniors, and those with chronic heart and lung disease among the most vulnerable,” said Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett. “Improvements in air quality can have profound health benefits, such as preventing deaths related to air pollution and reducing hospital visits for people with asthma. By ensuring that existing boilers operate efficiently, the City can continue its progress towards cleaner air and help all of us stay healthier.”

In 2011, more than 5,200 buildings burned Number 6 heating oil, the dirtiest grade of oil, which emits significant amounts of PM2.5, sulfur dioxide, nickel and other pollutants. A rule that took effect that same year required that all buildings must convert from Number 6 heating oil to a cleaner burning fuel by July of 2015. Thus far, more than 3,000 buildings have made the conversion and no longer burn Number 6. Neighborhoods with the highest density of emissions reductions from boiler conversions - such as northern Manhattan, northern Queens, and the South Bronx – have seen dramatic improvements in air quality.

Due to these air quality improvements, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene estimates that 800 lives will be saved each year and approximately 1,600 emergency department visits for asthma and 460 hospitalizations for respiratory and cardiovascular issues will be prevented every year. As buildings continue to convert to cleaner fuels and raise the efficiency of their boilers over the next several years the City expects further improvements in air quality and the health of all New Yorkers.

To make it easier for building owners to comply with the new rules, outdated requirements have been eliminated and provisions for one-time waivers and the certification of new equipment by a professional engineer have been added to streamline the permitting process. DEP will also establish on-line permitting to make it easier to access and review applications. Boilers that run more efficiently

will burn less fuel and lead to significant savings for building owners. Yearly savings based on the size of the boiler and 3 percent increase in efficiency:

Boiler Size	Yearly Savings
3 MMBtu/hr	$7,745
4 MMBtu/hr	$10,327
5 MMBtu/hr	$12,909
7 MMBtu/hr	$18,072
8 MMBtu/hr	$20,654
10 MMBtu/hr	$25,818
15 MMBtu/hr	$38,726
20 MMBtu/hr	$51,635

Later this year DEP will also introduce a proposed update of New York City's Air Code to the City Council. If it is enacted this will be the first major revision of the code in nearly four decades and will simplify compliance requirements and streamline the permitting process. The proposed revisions will update emission standards and focus on pollution sources that currently have little or no emission control requirements, such as commercial cooking establishments. The code will also eliminate outdated provisions to reflect the current emissions standards for testing.

DEP has also partnered with National Grid to initiate a first in the nation program to capture the biogas byproduct of the wastewater treatment process and purify it into reusable, pipeline quality natural gas for residential and commercial use. This program has the potential to create enough energy to heat 5,200 New York City homes and reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 90,000 metric tons – the equivalent of removing nearly 19,000 cars from the road.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than nine million residents, and collects and treats to federal Clean Water Act standards more than 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day. DEP also regulates air quality, hazardous waste, and critical quality of life issues, including noise. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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