

CITY OF ALBANY



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Gerald D. Jennings
MAYOR

Philip F. Calderone
DEPUTY MAYOR

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAYOR JENNINGS ANNOUNCES **BACKWATER VALVE GRANT PROGRAM**

Albany, NY-Mayor Gerald D. Jennings today announced a \$500,000 incentive program to assist City residents with the cost of installing backwater valves to prevent sanitary and storm water backups in the basements of their homes.

The program will provide grants of \$1,000 to \$1,500 for residents who apply and qualify for installation of such a device. Residents will be required to complete an application and provide documentation that they have experienced basement flooding within the last five years in order to qualify.

"Although the New York State and City plumbing codes require property owners to install backwater valves in most cases, we understand that, for some, the cost to install such devices is prohibitive. With this new incentive program, we hope that more residents will be able to afford them," Mayor Jennings noted.

"Supporting our vibrant and diverse neighborhoods throughout the City is vitally important to my administration," the Mayor noted. "This program is one more way to support the high quality of life our residents have come to enjoy."

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Applications for the grant may be obtained from the Department of Water and Water Supply, 35 Erie Blvd, which will be coordinating the program for the City. Owners of single or two-family owner-occupied properties must provide a completed application, after which the property will be subject to an inspection by the City. Once the City approves the application, the property owner will then be responsible for hiring a contractor to install the valve. Prior to installation, the property owner must obtain a written plan and cost estimate from the contractor, and submit that information to the City for review.

Upon approval by the City of the contractor's plan, the property owner will authorize installation of the valve. Upon completion of the work, the property owner will pay the contractor, submitting the paid invoice to the City for review and approval. Another on-site inspection of the completed work will be required prior to the City authorizing payment.

Under the terms of the program, all qualified property owners are eligible for a grant of \$1,000. Property owners may apply for an additional \$500 which will be available to property owners who qualify based on a review of financial information submitted by the property owner.

All applications must be submitted by July 15, 2008, and no applications submitted after that date will be considered. Applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis. Once the funds are expended, the program will end. In order to qualify, property owners must provide evidence of basement flooding between 2004 and 2008.

In addition to the backwater valve program, the City already has begun implementing a program to restrict flow from selected catch basins to the combined sewer system. The City also is exploring plans to add groundwater recharge systems to replace connections of catch basins in certain neighborhoods where problems persist.

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