



**FINANCE  
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THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FINANCE COMMISSIONER MARTHA E. STARK AND DEP COMMISSIONER EMILY LLOYD ANNOUNCE START OF CITY'S FIRST LIEN SALE PROCESS SINCE 2006**

***LIENS ON 24,593 PROPERTIES WITH TOTAL DEBT VALUE OF \$469.8 MILLION TO BE SOLD UNLESS OWNERS RESOLVE DEBT BY MAY 16***

**More than 14,500 Residential Properties At Risk Due to Water Debt Only**

New York City Finance Commissioner Martha E. Stark and Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Emily Lloyd announced today that the Department of Finance has sent notices to 24,593 owners at risk of having a lien sold on their property.

Owners of the 24,593 properties - up from 6,640 in 2006 - will receive 90-day warning letters this week notifying them that that the City intends to sell their property and/or water debt to a private collector unless they resolve their debt by May 16. These owners owe a total of more than \$454 million in property and water charges.

"I urge all owners who receive a lien sale notice this week to come forward voluntarily and pay, or tell us if you think our records are incorrect, so we don't have to sell your debt to a private collector," said Finance Commissioner Martha Stark. "Even if you can't make the full payment, you can pay in installments to protect your property."

"Every property that appears on the lien sale list is eligible for participation in the Payment Incentive Program, which offers deep discounts on overdue water and sewer charges," said DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd. "We

also have created a Safety Net Referral Program, which allows for a range of options to assist the City's most vulnerable populations."

This is the first year that liens may be sold on residential properties that have a water-only component. In prior years, a 2- or 3-family home, a condominium, or a cooperative would have to be delinquent on their property taxes for three straight years in order for water debt to be included in the sale. As a result, there were no effective collection tools available to penalize property owners who did not pay their water and sewer bills, resulting in higher rates for those property owners who do pay. Including properties that haven't paid their water bill for one year in the lien sale will lead to greater compliance, better collections, and more timely resolution of any potential mistakes.

The City has collected more than \$2 billion in delinquent property tax and water charges since 1996 through annual lien sales, allowing the City to reduce the number of properties it has to manage. At the same time, the lien sale has increased voluntary payments and reduced the number of foreclosures faced by owners who owe outstanding debt to the City.

Delinquent owners have until May 16 to resolve their debt. Installment plans are available. Payments can be made online, at any of Finance's Borough Business Centers or by mail, regardless of where the property is located. To ensure timely processing, Finance advises owners *not* to make payments by mail after April 25.

The 90-day list of properties has been published today in the *Daily News* and has been advertised in several other newspapers. Finance has also published the list online at [nyc.gov/liensale](http://nyc.gov/liensale), and will update the list as owners resolve their debt. Lien sale information will be available online soon in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian and Creole.

Owners who need help resolving their debt or believe that the City's records are incorrect should contact Finance or DEP immediately. Information is available at [nyc.gov/liensale](http://nyc.gov/liensale) or by calling 311.

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