

**Alida Camp**  
**Chair**

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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**

July 24, 2018

Vincent Sapienza  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Environmental Protection  
59-17 Junction Boulevard  
Flushing, NY 11373

Oxiris Barbot, MD  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
42-09 28<sup>th</sup> Street  
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Commissioner Sapienza and Commissioner Barbot:

I am writing to you on behalf of Manhattan Community Board 8, which encompasses the Upper East Side of Manhattan and Roosevelt Island. A health issue concerning the safety of the drinking water at public water fountains has arisen on Roosevelt Island that demands immediate attention. The Roosevelt Island Committee of Community Board 8 passed a resolution on July 19, attached to this letter, in connection with this concern.

Following concerns about the lack of water for the Wildlife Freedom Foundation (WFF) cat sanctuary on Roosevelt Island, Community Board 8 passed a resolution calling for RIOC to return the water source for the cats. I understand that RIOC complied with this request, but also required WFF to sign a waiver that the water connected to the sprinkler system flowing to the Sanctuary might be contaminated. This raised concerns that other water flowing through the sprinkler system to the sprinklers and public drinking fountains might also be contaminated.

On July 6, RIOC turned off the sprinklers and water fountains on Roosevelt Island. I understand that the Roosevelt Island community has been given very little information about what water sources could have been contaminated, and when they can expect these water sources to be turned back on.

The lack of safe drinking water on Roosevelt Island is unacceptable. We have had several hot summer days already and August will most likely be warmer. It is extremely troubling to think that anyone who has recently used the water fountains or run through the sprinklers was exposed to non-potable or otherwise contaminated water.

The water running through the sprinklers and fountains must be evaluated immediately by the appropriate health and environmental agencies, including the Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Health. Additionally, the community on Roosevelt Island must be informed immediately of the potential contamination risk as well as the remedy that will ensure safe water.

Community Board 8 urges you to take immediate action to resolve this situation that may affect the health and well-being of the Roosevelt Island community.

Thank you.



Alida Camp

Chair, Community Board 8 Manhattan

CC: Susan G. Rosenthal, President & CEO, RIOC  
Ben Kallos, New York City Council  
Jose Serrano, New York State Senate  
Rebecca Seawright, New York State Assembly

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