

ERIE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VILLAGE OF BLASDELL-ECWA COMPLETE WATER SYSTEM MERGER ***Village to save \$200,000 annually, stabilize rate structure***

BLASDELL, NY – Village of Blasdell Mayor and Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) officials today formally announced the completion of the village water system merger with the ECWA at a ceremony near Blasdell Village Hall.

Village officials have consistently discussed merging with the ECWA for several years and actively pursued the effort after a \$440,000 grant was jointly obtained in 2010 by the village and ECWA from the New York State Shared Municipal Services Incentive (SMSI) grant program, which promotes the sharing and consolidation of municipal services and helped defray the costs of a feasibility study and implementation of the system merger.

“This is a great day for the Village of Blasdell and more importantly for village ratepayers”, said Blasdell Mayor Michael Petrie. “Merging the village water system with the ECWA will result in \$200,000 in annual savings to the village, an improved, more efficient water system and a stabilized rate structure for village ratepayers. I want to commend and thank our village trustees, village administrator Janet Plarr and ECWA’s commissioners and management for being progressive and doing what is right for the future of the village.”

Over the last two years the village invested \$2.5 million to replace 6,000 feet of waterline and installed new remote read meters, the same meters currently used by ECWA, for all village customers. The upgrades were necessary to meet ECWA’s system standards. The ECWA now owns the village system and is fully responsible for all operations, maintenance and infrastructure upgrades.

“The Erie County Water Authority is very proud to have partnered with the Village of Blasdell on this successful merger that will result in long term savings for village ratepayers,” said ECWA acting Chairman Francis Warthling. “Mayor Petrie and village trustees provided the necessary leadership and commitment to make this merger a reality, which was an important decision for the future of Blasdell. The ECWA looks forward to continuing our efforts to further assist local governments that want to lessen the burden on their ratepayers by merging their water systems with ECWA, which as the region’s largest and best equipped public water utility, is most often able to provide more cost-effective service delivery.”

Warthling concluded that Blasdell joins a growing list of community’s that in recent years have realized that ECWA provided the best value for ratepayers and have decided to merger their systems with ECWA, including: the city of Tonawanda; the towns of Clarence, Orchard Park, Hamburg and Evans; and the villages of Depew and Lancaster.

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