
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 2

 New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands
 290 Broadway - New York, New York 10007-1866

www.epa.gov/region2

Nina Habib Spencer (212) 637-3670

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION GROUP IN WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN SELECTED FOR
EPA BROWNFIELDS YOUTH JOB TRAINING PROGRAM**

FOR RELEASE: Friday, December 21, 2001

(#01147) NEW YORK, N.Y.— Eighty young men and women from Brooklyn will have the opportunity to pursue their dreams of becoming environmental technicians through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Job Training and Development program. EPA selected the St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corporation in Williamsburg to run an intensive program for qualified young adult residents, which provides six weeks of hands-on, how-to training on environmental assessment and cleanups in local communities. The course also features innovative technologies training and field demonstrations. St. Nicks will run the program with a \$200,000 grant from EPA and leveraged funds in excess of \$85,000. The group's aim is to achieve at least a 70% job placement rate.

EPA supports communities across the country through its Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative - a national effort to renew industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. The area is zoned for mixed use and includes residential properties among heavy industrial facilities and, underused and vacant brownfields. New York City, under its EPA-sponsored brownfields pilot project, has slated two sites near St. Nicks for cleanup and development.

"St. Nicks is a proven winner in the field of youth job training. They recently came through in 72 hours with twenty screened candidates for jobs at ground zero to help meet the immediate demand for emergency response workers," said EPA Regional Administrator Jane M. Kenny.



The New York Times

Grants will help protect land in a 26-million-acre stretch of forest.

Denise Schlener, said the goal was not to acquire all the private property in the Northern Forest but to protect pieces that would link together adjoining forest areas to preserve the larger landscape. She estimated that as many as 5 million acres could be protected with money from the institute's program.

The \$400,000 grant to the Nature Conservancy's Adirondack chapter will be used to repay part of the loan used to buy three large tracts of land

that it recently acquired from the International Paper Company for \$10.5 million. The properties, which are near the town of Long Lake in the central Adirondacks, include a pristine 800-acre lake that has not been open to the public.

The Adirondack chapter's director of land protection, Todd Dunham, said the group borrowed money to buy the land and plans to eventually resell it to New York State, or to private owners who will promise not to develop it. "The property was available, and we had to move on it as quickly as we could," he said. "These kinds of resources don't come up for sale very often."

The Northern Forest covers about 14 million acres in Maine, 8 million acres in New York and 2 million acres each in Vermont and New Hampshire.

A Mittenless Autumn, for Better and Worse

By PAM BELLUCK
and ANDREW C. REVKIN

Across the Northeast, people opened their doors yesterday to discover something unfamiliar: a chill in the air.

Weeks later than usual, temperatures have finally descended into something like their normal late-December range. The cold snap followed an autumn in which sidewalk cafes stayed open into December, golf courses were packed with plaid and the first World Series game ever played in November felt more like May. The unseasonal curveball that the weather threw at the calendar affected almost everyone, for better and for worse.

Varel Bailey, a cattle and pig farmer in Anita, Iowa, has been spending 5 percent to 10 percent less on grain because cattle eat less when it is not cold.

In New Mexico, Ski Santa Fe, a snow-starved resort, had to postpone its planned Thanksgiving Day opening to Dec. 8, and even now has less than half its skiing areas open.

In the natural world, daffodils bloomed, and the grass at the New York Botanical Garden was a lush green the week before Christmas. In Pennsylvania, a baby killdeer hatched in December instead of April. And in Massachusetts, Bill Davis, a state wildlife biologist, came home from a deer station one recent

day with a sunburn.

"It's global warming, dude," said Pito Robles, 28, an auto mechanic who on Thursday was dangling his fishing line into the Hudson River near West 66th Street in Manhattan. "I don't care if the whole planet burns up in a hundred years. If I can get me a fish today, it's cool by me."

In fact, the warm spell that settled over much of the nation this fall may not be caused by global warming, the gradual but potentially calamitous rise in worldwide temperatures that most scientists attribute, at least in part, to fuel-burning human activities like making electricity and driving. When burned, fuels release carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases" that trap heat in the atmosphere.

The fall weather could have been a fluke, climatologists agree, because in the short run weather often does unanticipated things.

But the unusually balmy fall seems to fit at least two longer-term patterns. One is that the weather has become significantly more erratic and variable, and that is likely to continue, scientists say.

Another is that the warming trend is destined to continue. This year is expected to be the second warmest on earth since 1860, when temperatures

were first measured systematically. Nine of the 10 warmest years have occurred since 1990. And one of the world's leading forecasting agencies, the Hadley Center for Climate Prediction and Research in Britain, says there is a 75 percent chance that next year will be even warmer than this year.

So far, the results of global warming in North America seem to be a mix of good and bad. Since 1960, New England has seen the last hard freeze come a day earlier every three years, extending the growing season. But in the Middle Atlantic and the South, shores are receding as seas, slowly raised by melting glaciers, eat away at coasts.

And Alaska, where warming has been most pronounced, is undergoing a host of changes. Glaciers are receding, permafrost melting, shrubs spreading across previously barren tundra. The start of the Iditarod dog race this year had to be moved north because the trail near the usual starting point was too mushy.

But the growing variability of the weather may be as troublesome as the warming. This weekend, after a mittenless fall, temperatures are plummeting quickly across the country. And the prospect of a sudden, sustained cold snap is making many people uneasy.

Will birds that delayed their ritual migration be trapped up north by frigid weather? Will buds that bloomed in December's warm chicanery burst their pipes and suffer winter damage?

"The party is almost over for people who like warm weather," said Jon B. Davis, a meteorologist for Salomon Smith Barney in Chicago. "Wednesday's 49 degrees in Chicago was probably the warmest we will see until late March. We are headed into a major-league cold pattern."

Labor and Industry

Even if this winter is about to earn its reputation, the fall's warm weather has made its mark — economically, environmentally and in other ways.

It has been a boon to workers at the site of the World Trade Center disaster. Joe Bradley, the foreman of a crew of machine operators struggling to clear rubble at ground zero, said the mild weather allowed them to clean up the site quickly and to recover bodies they might not have otherwise found.

"It gave us an opportunity to get the bulk of the work done," Mr. Bradley said. "It was a gift from God, a real miracle."

Economically, the warm spell has cut both ways, benefiting some industries while hurting others. Warm weather, it turns out, may get people out of their houses, but not necessarily into stores. Foot traffic may have increased, retailers say, but people tend to window-shop. And they are not buying the winter supplies that stores have stocked. As a result, retailers have slashed prices on things like coats, scarves and gloves.

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An EPA environmental contractor hired the twenty candidates from St. Nicks. The workers helped set up and then staffed EPA wash stations for World Trade Center rescue workers and also worked on debris removal efforts at ground zero. St. Nicks places approximately 350 people a year in jobs, and recently graduated 34 people as environmental technicians.

"This brownfields training program fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment for young people, who may not be in the educational mainstream. They are given job skills they can use to improve the environment in their own communities," Ms. Kenny added.

The intensive brownfields pilot training program includes courses on hazardous waste health and safety training for workers, preliminary assessment and cleanup investigations, auditing, site characterization, risk communication and the selection of appropriate cleanup actions. The hands-on training will have a particular focus on the use of cutting-edge, innovative assessment and cleanup technologies.

New York City is St. Nicks' partner in the program and the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination has supported the group in the past by donating educational resources. St. Nicks has already received letters of support from five prospective employers and the Carpenters Union, as well as community organizations. St. Nicks will track trainees for more than two years and offer lifetime career development and job placement support. St. Nicks hopes to permanently offer environmental technician training through public and private funds.

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A \$12 Million Plan to Save The Forests by Buying Them

By WINNIE HU

WHITE PLAINS, Dec. 22 — The Open Space Institute, one of the largest conservation groups in the Northeast, has set aside \$12 million to help land trusts protect some of the largest and best-known forest areas in the Adirondacks, the Green Mountains of Vermont, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

The money will be awarded to selected land trusts in the next three years, and can be used only for property in what is known collectively as the Northern Forest, a 26-million-acre stretch of wilderness that takes roughly the shape of a barbell stretching from New York to Maine.

About 4 million acres of that is already included in state and federal parks, the single biggest chunk being New York State's 2.6-million-acre stake in the Adirondack Park.

This week, the institute announced that the first \$1.4 million of that money would be used to help three groups buy a total of 62,854 acres of privately owned land in the Northern Forest. The grants include \$400,000 to the Nature Conservancy for 26,500 acres in the central Adirondacks, and another \$400,000 grant to the Trust for Public Land for 13,910 acres in northern New Hampshire that will link two sections of the White Mountain National Forest.

The institute's focus on the Northern Forest comes when many finan-

cially struggling paper and pulp companies are closing aging mills in the Northeast, consolidating their holdings, and selling off vast tracts of forestland that they have owned for decades. In the past four years, these companies have sold nearly one-fifth of the land in the Northern Forest to financial investors and other timber companies, and to a much lesser extent, conservation groups, according to the institute's statistics.

But conservation groups have increasingly sought to acquire these lands, or the development rights to them, to prevent the new owners from chipping away at the Northern Forest. These groups say they want to protect wildlife habitats and public access to recreational areas, and just as important, to ensure that working forestland continues to be used for commercial timber harvests. Though the timber industry has steadily declined in the Northeast, it remains a vital part of the economy in many rural towns and villages.

"This is a one-time opportunity," said Joe Martens, president of the Open Space Institute. "The land is for sale now and a lot of these transactions are going to determine the fate of the Northern Forest for a long time to come."

David M. Smith, a professor emeritus at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Stud-

ies, said that conservation efforts were especially needed in areas near rivers and lakes in the Northern Forest. He said developers and second-home owners have been drawn to waterfront property, carving out private refuges that displace the wildlife. "There is a need to protect those lands," he said. "It's important to keep some of the tall pine trees as nesting sites for bald eagles and ospreys."

The Open Space Institute, a nonprofit group endowed with money from the Reader's Digest fortune, raised the \$12 million from two New York City philanthropies, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Surdna Foundation, and plans to supplement that with money from private donors. It has formed an advisory board of forestry experts and conservationists to review and select proposals from land trusts.

The institute's director of the Northern Forest Protection Fund,

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\$8 Million for Environmental Teaching

The Bank Street College of Education in Manhattan has received \$4 million from GILBERT AND SALLY KERLIN. Sally Kerlin is an alumna, class of 1936, and a life trustee. Bank Street will use the gift to teach natural and environmental sciences in its School for Children as well as in public schools in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut where the college runs programs and places teachers. Another recipient of \$4 million from the Kerlins is Wave Hill, the public garden and cultural center in Riverdale, the Bronx. It will provide support for its educational programs, which reach about 20,000 people annually. Mr. Kerlin is the founding chairman of Wave Hill. *Stephanie Rosenbloom*

NYT
12/19/01

Water Utility Officials Fear 'Backflow' From Reservoirs May Be Safe, but House Pipes Can Be Used to Push Toxins Into a

Neighborhood

By YOCHI J. DREAZEN

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

In St. Petersburg, Fla., water authorities are keeping a closer eye on system-wide water pressure. In Cleveland, officials are weighing whether to add more chlorine to their water so larger amounts of the chemical will linger in their pipes. In Portland, Ore., alarms are now triggered by smaller drops in water pressure than in the past.

Across the country, water utility officials are taking steps to prevent terrorists from reversing the flow of water into a home or business—which can be accomplished with a vacuum cleaner or bicycle pump—and using the resulting “backflow” to push poisons into a local water-distribution system. Such an attack would use utility pipes for the opposite of their intended purpose: Instead of carrying water out of a tap, the pipes would spread toxins to nearby homes or businesses.

Water utility officials say the backflow threat dominates their post-Sept. 11 discussions with law-enforcement personnel. Although utilities have posted extra guards to patrol reservoirs and treatment plants, officials say the biggest threat to the nation's water supply may be from the pipes that carry the water, not facilities that store or purify it.

“There's no question that the distribution system is the most vulnerable spot we have,” says John Sullivan, chief engineer for the Boston Water & Sewer Commission and president of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. “Our reservoirs are really well protected. Our water-treatment plants can be surrounded by cops and guards. But if there's an intentional attempt to create a backflow, there's no way to totally prevent it.”

Most reservoirs hold between three million and 30 million gallons of water, which would dilute any poison so significantly that terrorists would have to release enormous quantities to do serious damage. And most poison would be destroyed when the water was purified at a treatment plant. A backflow attack, by contrast, could spread highly concentrated amounts of poison to a few thousand homes or businesses, making the toxin far more effective.

Down the Pipes?

The federal government devotes little money to protecting the nation's water supply system, which many law enforcement officials see as a potential terrorist target.

- Amount of money spent by the Environmental Protection Agency to combat bioterrorism in fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2001: **\$2.5 million** (the agency spent \$10,000 on the issue in 1998, no money on it in 1999, and \$100,000 in 2000).
- Amount that municipal and private water-system officials wanted to see the agency spend on the issue in the current fiscal year: **\$155 million**.
- Amount the EPA will spend in the current fiscal year, according to recently passed emergency spending legislation: **\$90.3 million**.
- Total amount of money that water-system officials want Congress to devote to improving drinking-water and wastewater plants: **\$5 billion**.
- Total number of municipal water systems across the country: **54,064**.
- Total number of Americans served by the systems: **263.9 million**.
- Amount water systems would receive for immediate security projects, according to a just passed Senate bill: **\$50 million**.

Sources: EPA, American Water Works Association, WSJ research.

So far, the only backflow incidents on record have been accidental. Four years ago, dozens of gallons of fire-fighting foam backed up through the hoses of firefighters in Charlotte, N.C., and made its way into the city's water system, prompting officials to order thousands of residents not to shower or drink tap water for several days. In 1998, workers at a United Technologies Corp. Sikorsky helicopter plant in Bridgeport, Conn., added chemicals to the facility's fire prevention system to guard against corrosion. Some of the chemicals backed into the town's water system, deluging area homes with contaminated water that residents were told not to drink or use for washing or bathing.

There were no serious injuries in either case, but the incidents rattled many water officials. Even before the Sept. 11 attacks, fears of an accidental backflow incident led to the creation of a group called the American Backflow Prevention Association, which works with lawmakers, water officials and engineers across the country. The group publishes a newsletter and an educational comic book for children that features a character named Buster Backflow.

Still, experts have long feared that a terrorist would try an intentional attack. As Gay Porter DeNileon—a journalist who

serves on the National Critical Infrastructure Protection Advisory Group, a water-industry organization—put it in the May issue of the journal of the American Water Works Association, “One sociopath who understands hydraulics and has access to a drum of toxic chemicals could inflict serious damage pretty quickly.”

Utility officials say that it is difficult to fully prevent a backflow incident, but they are hopeful that they can limit the damage through early detection. The beginning of a backflow attack probably would be marked by a sudden drop in water pressure in a targeted neighborhood as terrorists stopped the flow of water into a home or business. The pressure would then climb as attackers reversed the flow of water and began using it to carry poison.

Utilities regularly monitor system-wide water pressure, because a sharp and unanticipated decrease—at times other than, say, halftime of the Superbowl, when tens of millions of American toilets flush—can indicate that a pipe has burst. Most utilities monitor pressure at water-treatment plants and inside the underground pipes that carry the water to nearby homes and businesses; some use advanced telemetric sensors inside pipes.

In recent weeks, many utilities say they have increased the frequency of their checks. “A small drop-off would attract

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Birds love N.Y. in winter

Count nets 60 species

By AMY SACKS
DAILY NEWS WRITER

The holidays can be a glorious time in the city, but many New Yorkers still prefer to fly south for the winter. Plenty of birds, however, seem intent on spending Christmas here.

The results of the 102nd Christmas Bird Count, held in Central Park last weekend, revealed that more bird species are flocking to the 843-acre park than ever before. Some 5,831 birds representing 60 species were spotted by teams of avid and amateur birders, who rose early to scour the park for both old-timers and newcomers — and count them, bird by bird.

Last year, the binocular-toting bird enthusiasts — all volunteers — spotted 57 species.

The bustling city, however, might seem an unlikely place for birds to migrate.

"Central Park is a green emerald in a sea of gray," said Alexander Brash, chief of the Urban Park Service. The city, he said, lies in the juncture of two migratory flyways, along both the East and West coasts.

Smorgasbord of options

And Central Park does not lack for food. Plants, berries and seeds are plentiful, but remnants of pretzels and hot dog buns left behind by parkgoers, Brash said, give the birds even more reason to stick around. "Survival is just a matter of energy," he said. "As long as a bird has sufficient food, they can last through a very cold night."

The Ramble, a 37-acre wilderness between 72nd and 79th Sts., is the most densely bird-populat-

ed area of the park, where up to 50 different species can be seen on a good day during the spring migration.

The pigeon, not surprisingly, topped the list at 1,046. Close behind were 840 house sparrows, followed by 697 white-throated sparrows, 560 starlings, 414 mallards and 246 gulls. The gulls, Brash said, flock in huge numbers from the salty Hudson and East rivers to the reservoir, where they drink fresh water and often sleep.

Other birds also seen in previous years include 225 blue jays, eight red-tailed hawks, Baltimore orioles, and a myriad of songbirds including cardinals and mockingbirds. The abundance of the northern shoveler — an algae-eating duck that sifts the wa-

ter with its spatula bill is one of the neatest increases, Brash said — this year totaled 218.

But it was the new additions, including falcons and Carolina wrens, that caused the biggest stir among birders.

Tantalizing sight

For Sarah Elliott, 71, who has counted birds for the past 33 years, the sight of one of the two screech owls recently introduced into the park was tantalizing. "I just watched it take off and fly down 59th St. carrying a small rodent in its claw," said Elliott, who is referred to by her peers as the "Queen of Birding."

The day was one of camaraderie and a reason to be out in the fresh air, but the bird count itself is part of a serious attempt to monitor the array of species

found throughout the United States. It began, Elliott said, in 1900 by ornithologist Frank Chapman, to protest the gentry's indiscriminate hunting of birds.

Today, the tally, conducted globally, contributes ornithological census data to the scientific and naturalist community. The Audubon Society will conduct counts throughout the month at more than 1,800 locations nationwide.

"It's good for people to be out in the dead of winter," Elliott said. "It's jolly and kind of mindless."

And her fascination with the birds is simple: "They're beautiful, they're free and they can fly."

For information on Sarah Elliott's bird classes or other bird-related events, contact the New York City Audubon Society at (212) 691-7483.

DAILY NEWS
12/22/01

Lighting the Way Throughout City

Torchbearers carry Olympic spirit, inspiration

By Regine Labossiere

STAFF WRITER

Today, the light comes to New York City.

And before the Olympic flame leaves New York on Wednesday, it will have passed through all five boroughs, carried by people whose lives have inspired others.

The Olympic torch — engraved with the 19th Winter Olympics motto, "Light the fire within" — is scheduled to take off today at 10:35 a.m. on Staten Island.

The torchbearers, including New York Yankees manager Joe Torre and "Superman" Christopher Reeve, will carry it through Brooklyn.

Torchbearers will carry the flame through Queens, then ride the Christopher Columbus ferry, which leaves from the New York Waterway terminal at Borden Avenue in Hunters Point.

The ferry will pass lower Manhattan and make its way to Pier 90. Among the people taking the torch to Rockefeller Center from the pier at West 50th Street are Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. The mayor will carry the torch for the last two-tenths of a mile before lighting the cauldron in Rockefeller Center, putting the flame to rest for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Wednesday morning, the torch will begin its procession from Rockefeller Center, through Manhattan and the Bronx, and on to New Haven, Conn.

The Olympic Torch relay will cross 46 states in 65 days, carried by 11,500 torchbearers. Two-hundred forty of those torchbearers will carry the Olympic spirit through New York City.

The torchbearers were nominated by family members, friends and colleagues who wrote essays explaining how the nominees embodied the Olympic spirit and provided inspiration to their communities.

Lyzbeth Glick of New Jersey will carry the flame today in honor of her husband, Jeremy Glick, who was

aboard United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in Shanksville, Pa., Sept. 11. Glick received a phone call from her husband while aboard the plane, asking if he should attack the hijackers and she answered yes.

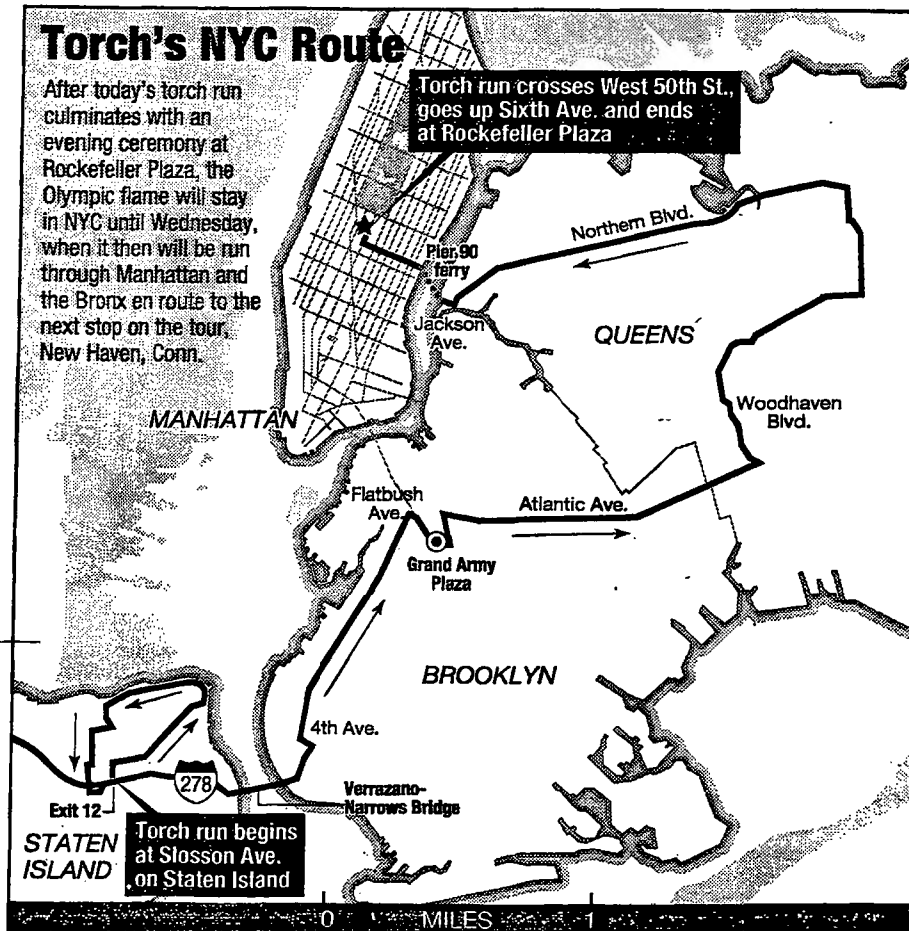
Kathy Goldman founded the Community Food Resource Center in 1980 and her organization offers a wide range of assistance to residents in Harlem. Goldman, who lives on the Upper West Side, will carry the torch today.

John Gill's only son was one of the firefighters first on the scene at the World Trade Center. Gill, from College Point, will pass the torch today.

A former Olympic speed skater who competed in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1984, Lydia Stephans of Park Slope also is carrying the torch today.

Raymond Lumpp of East Williston, was a member of the 1948 gold-medal U.S. Olympic basketball team, served in the Air Force in World War II, and played with the Knicks for four years in the early 1950s. Lumpp, the athletic director for the New York Athletic Club for 42 years, is carrying the torch today.

The public can view the Olympic torch route on the Web site www.nyc2012.com.



Newsday / Rod Eyer

DAILY NEWS 12/22/01

Water...

attention it wouldn't have even a short time ago," says Michelle Clements, a spokeswoman for Oregon's Portland Water District, which serves 190,000 customers.

But officials concede that it might be difficult for them to actually spot the minor drop in pressure that could be the start of a backflow attack. Jeffrey Danneels, who specializes in infrastructure security at Sandia National Laboratory in New Mexico, says that water officials might have a hard time detecting a backflow attack originating in a single home or apartment building. "The smaller the pipe, the harder it would be to notice," he says.

Another way to protect the public is to increase the amounts of chlorine or other chemicals added to water so that more of the chemical will remain in the pipes, providing residual protection against some toxins, according to Tom Curtis, deputy director of the American Water Works Association, which represents 4,300 public and private water utilities.

At the Cleveland Division of Water, officials are considering adding more chlorine in areas where residual levels are low, says Julius Ciaccia Jr., Cleveland's water commissioner. Even before the Sept. 11 attacks, some utilities had begun replacing the chlorine with chloramine, a related substance made from the combination of chlorine and ammonia that is believed to linger in pipes longer. Increasing the chemicals has drawbacks, however. "You can only go so far before people begin to complain about the taste," says Mr. Curtis.

The only sure way of preventing a backflow attack, water officials says, is installing valves to prevent water from flowing back into the pipes. Many homes have such valves on toilets and boilers. But virtually none have them on sinks, in part because water officials long assumed that the biggest threat they faced was natural, such as an earthquake, flood or hurricane carrying debris into a reservoir or pipe. Water officials say retrofitting existing structures with the valves would be prohibitively expensive.

"We're used to natural incidents. We're ready for them," says Mr. Sullivan of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. "But we've never really looked at what could happen if someone really wanted to come and get us. And that's a hard adjustment to make."

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