Environmental Protection
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Cas Holloway, Commissioner

WEEKLY
PIPELINE

February 23, 2010 Volume I • Issue 8

BWS Wastewater Treatment Plant

Protecting a Pristine Watershed through Infrastructure Improvements

On February 12th when **Commissioner Holloway** announced the first new connections made to the newly-expanded Grahamsville sewer system, we were reminded of how infrastructure projects help protect the Delaware and other watersheds. We also learned that Grahamsville is one of seven wastewater treatment plants operated by DEP in upstate New York. Unlike the 14 plants in New York City managed by the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment, the plants upstate are operated by the Bureau of Water Supply (BWS) under **Deputy Commissioner Paul Rush**.

Managing them is **Jose Atkinson, Acting Chief, Wastewater Operations**. Jose, who has been at DEP for seven years, is especially proud of the role that DEP plays to ensure the Catskill/Delaware system remains unfiltered. "My operations team and I are dedicated to ensuring this mission is carried out on a daily basis, and we are proud to be

an integral part of providing quality drinking water to the customers of New York City." Effluent leaving the upstate watershed plants discharges into NYC drinking water supply tributaries and must receive the highest level of treatment. The minimum level of treatment required is usually primary and secondary treatment, while tertiary treatment removes pollutants like phosphorus that are resistant to conventional treatment. Tertiary treatment includes ultraviolet (UV) light disinfection which is used instead of chlorine. Because no chemicals are used, the treated water has no adverse effect on organisms that later consume it.

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Spotlight on Safety

Foot Protection

Employees who face possible foot or leg injuries from falling or rolling objects, electrical hazards, and exposure to hot substances or corrosive materials should wear protective footwear (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.96).

There are various types of foot protection used for different operations. Rubber or overboots (non-steel toed), work shoes, and work boots are some examples of protective footwear used in the workplace.

As with all PPE, safety footwear should be inspected prior to each use:

- Check shoes for wear and tear.
- Look for cracks or holes, separation of materials, broken buckles or laces.
- Check soles of shoes for pieces of metal or other embedded items that could present electrical or tripping hazards.
- Follow the manufacturers' instructions for cleaning and maintenance of protective footwear.

Click here for more information on DEP's Foot Protection PPE Policy.

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city.

CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH PIPELINE. HELP IS ON THE WAY.

Commissioner's Corner

Tonight I'll be in Brooklyn for the third of six Community Outreach meetings to talk to residents and business owners in every borough (twice in Queens) about the services our 6000 employees provide, the capital projects we're building in neighborhoods throughout the City, and the study that DEP recently completed on water rates. Council members **Leroy Comrie**, Queens - 27th CD, and **James Vacca**, Bronx-13th CD, hosted the events in their respective boroughs, and teams from our **Bureau of Customer Services** set-up mobile stations to assist customers with billing and other inquiries. We're off to a great start, and I'm looking forward to upcoming sessions in Brooklyn, Staten Island, and Manhattan. Get details about upcoming meetings here.

On Saturday, Deputy Commissioner for BWSO **James Roberts** and his shaft maintenance team took me and Assistant Commissioner for IT **Cecil McMaster** on a guided tour of shaft sites on City Tunnels 1, 2, and 3. Acting Chief of Shaft Maintenance **Michael Sullivan**, Mechanical Engineer **Rich Rambrich**, Superintendent **Jaime Berkeley**, Machinist Helper **William Satterfield**, and Watershed Maintainers **Alvin Wells**, **Artie Agostino**, and **Marcus Evans** explained the complex and ingenious mechanics of our Water Tunnel shaft systems, and the telemetry we have in place to capture critical data about tunnel performance. The BWSO team fielded all of my questions about riser and section valves—the ultimate guardians of our in-City distribution network; and we ended the day at one of the system's newest additions, City Tunnel 3, Shaft 13B.

Finally, this week we bid farewell to **Anne Canty**, Deputy Commissioner for Communications and Intergovernmental Affairs, who is stepping down at the end of this week. Anne has done a fantastic job over the last 3 1/2 years, and is moving on to become Vice President for Communications and Marketing at the American Museum of Natural History. Read more about her DEP career below, and join me in thanking her for her tremendous service.

All the Best!

As **Deputy Commissioner of Communications and Intergovernmental Affairs, Anne Canty** has worked tirelessly in managing the public information, community outreach and legislative affairs of the Agency. The bureau handles press and media inquiries, environmental education, special projects and events, production of all public information materials, and coordinates all federal, state and local legislative initiatives concerning the Agency.

Steve Lawitts, who has worked with Anne for the last few years observed "Whether it was a City Council hearing, a press interview, a mayoral event, or a meeting with the community, Anne prepared us with the right information and rehearsed us on how best to say it. When brainstorming, Anne has a peculiar gift for making you think she agrees with you, and then getting you to change your mind."

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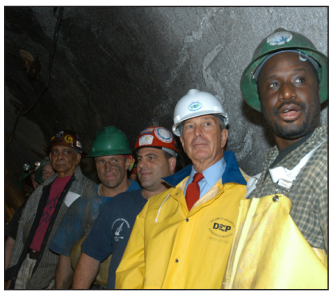
Focus on the Field

Daniel Phelan is a **Senior Air and Noise Pollution Inspector** who covers Queens and the Bronx in **Gerry Kelpin's Division of Air/Noise Policy, Permitting & Enforcement**, which is part of **BEC** overseen by **Assistant Commissioner Michael Gilsenan**. Dan is one of 40 inspectors responsible for enforcing the City's Air and Noise Pollution Codes. Working day and night shifts, including weekends, they respond to multifarious and sometimes hilarious (bullfrogs leaping about Brooklyn's Prospect Park) complaints from the public, coming chiefly through 311. In 2009 there were approximately 39,000 noise complaints, down from 49,000 in 2008. Dan gave some specific examples of how the new law better serves the public. He said, "The new code lowered the City's decibel standard, an international standard for measuring sound, making it a more difficult measure to meet." He then cited some code changes: "Contractors must have noise mitigation plans in place before construction work starts. Unreasonably loud music from bars and restaurants is now restricted. Food-vending trucks cannot play jingles while parked; and pet owners are held accountable for their animal's noise (e.g. barking dogs), particularly at night." Enforcement is coordinated across multiple agencies including NYPD, DOB, DOHMH, and, in cases involving nightclubs, the State Liquor Authority.

Asked about the Air Code, Dan said air emissions, which may emit VOCs (volatile organic compounds) or other contaminants are empirically evaluated. "Visible air emissions are carefully observed; non-visible odors and fumes are detected by olfactory perception. These emissions usually come from industrial/commercial equipment, such as paint spray booths and spray guns used in auto body/repair shops; printing presses and inks in print shops; perchloroethylene and other chemicals used in dry cleaners; dust from cement mixing yards and wood-working shops." In response to a closing question about how he can respond to the myriad of complaints year-round, Dan said…softly, "I like what I do and the satisfaction I get by helping the people in the City."

DEP: Then & Now

Then: **Mayor LaGuardia** officially opens the sluice gates to a diversion tunnel of Delaware Aqueduct, putting it into emergency service. The Delaware system had not yet been completed. Construction activity had been suspended; both supplies and workers were diverted to support the WWII effort. 04/05/1944.



Now: **Mayor Bloomberg** visits DEP employees and contractors at City Water Tunnel No. 3 in Manhattan at the end of excavation.

Ask Cas

askcas@dep.nyc.gov

Q. Why isn't the employee performance evaluation process computerized? It could be set up in a protected database that would allow managers and supervisors to write evaluations, tasks and standards, and provide the ability to track performance over time. The use of a paper system seems inefficient, consumes a lot of administrative hours, and increases the risk for errors, incomplete work, and delays. Thank you for your consideration. **Persis Luke, Director of Environmental Health & Safety, Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations**

A. Thanks for your question, Persis. You're right that computerized evaluations would be more effective for DEP employees and managers who have, or have regular access to a computer. In fact, HRA Deputy Commissioner **ZoeAnn Campbell** and AC for IT **Cecil McMaster** are developing a computerized performance evaluation that we plan to roll-out by the end of this year. Note that approximately one-third of the agency's workforce is field-based, so part of the evaluation process will likely remain paper-based. But in general, a computerized process will be more efficient, and enable us to get an agency-wide sense of how we are performing.

(BWS... - continued)

The Port Jervis plant is the largest with a capacity of 2.5 million gallons a day (mgd) and protects the Delaware river, while the Grahamsville Plant, the least capacity at 0.18 mgd. The Grahamsville and Margaretville plants utilize glass greenhouses, minus the flowers, and use solar energy for the sludge drying beds. Once dried to a "cake-like" consistency, the sludge is transported away. The Pine Hill plant discharges into the Ashokan, the Mahopac into Croton Falls, while the Grand Gorge and Tannersville plants protect the Schoharie.

For **Tina Johnstone**, **Director of Operations**, the high level of certification and technical expertise required of those staffing these plants really shines through in the numbers. "Due to the successful operation of these plants by these dedicated personnel, we continuously meet 99-100% of our regulated parameters on an annual basis. The level of protection they are providing NYC's reservoirs is unmatched – the water that leaves these plants exceeds drinking water standards." Let's drink to that!

Event Calendar:

The International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York – 2/28-10-5; 3/1 10-5; 3/2- 10-4; Javits Center

(Canty... - continued)

Anne has worked closely with legislators, advisory groups, advocates, and community boards, among others to build a greater understanding of DEP's functions and capabilities.

We know she will stand out in her new role as Vice President for Communications and Marketing at the American Museum of Natural History and we wish her the best. Steve adds "We will miss her very much and can't wait to start receiving those hourly AMR readings from the Museum.

Milestones

Congratulations to the following employees who have retired from BWT's Oakwood Beach plant with a combined 156 years of service: **Nick Cartesio** – 34yrs, **Sam Carannante** - 26 yrs, **Jim Henry** – 30 yrs, **Frank Tommasini** – 36 yrs, **John Carbonella** – 30 yrs.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.