

Quality Control



The Bureau of Water Supply's Division of Distribution Water Quality Operations (DWQO), managed by **Salome Freud**, is on the front line of ensuring and maintaining the City's water quality. Every year they conduct more than 330,000 tests in the lab and an additional 116,000 in the field. This comes after more than 230,000 tests are performed upstate by Chief **Lori Emery's** Division of Watershed Water Quality Operations. If it sounds like a lot, just remember that nine million people depend on New York City's water—a resource that people literally cannot do without.

On a daily basis, members of DWQO look for pH levels, chlorine, temperature, turbidity, fluoride, total coliform, and other indicators. If

any unusual results are observed, DWQO investigates further to get a clearer picture, or reaches out to other bureaus—like the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations—for assistance. These tests give DEP a picture of what's happening in DEP's vast underground water delivery network. They can also help target problem areas so the Agency can take appropriate action.

However, there's a lot more that goes into protecting NYC's drinking water. DEP just released the findings of a year-long study, which confirmed that there is no risk from pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs) in NYC's drinking water. Over the last year, BWS's Division of Distribution Water Quality Science and Research (DWQSR), tested for 78 PPCPs and found trace amounts of 16 of them in the watershed. But, just because something is detected, doesn't mean it's dangerous. For instance, ibuprofen is present, but the concentration is so low that you'd need to drink 846,000 glasses of water in a single day to get the dose con-

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Spotlight on Safety

National Safety Month

Who knows more about the hazards of your job and the precautions to take to prevent accidents and injuries? The answer should be "I do." You are the expert in job hazards and protective measures because you are the one who face risks. Your supervisor and safety officer/coordinator can provide support, but ultimately it is up to you to stay safe.

Reflect about what you have done during the past year to prevent injuries. Have you:

- Referred to DEP's Policies & Procedures?

- Focused on your tasks and avoided distractions?
- Considered the hazards before starting a task?
- Worn required PPE?
- Applied what you learned in training classes?
- Reported safety concerns in your work area?
- Read labels and material safety data sheets (MSDSs) before using chemicals? Suggested ways to improve workplace safety?

Your answers should be Yes!
Know safety = No Accidents


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



Vincent Sapienza, Engineering Chief **Anthony Maracic**, and Associate Project Manager **Ian Ramos** for delivering this important quality-of-life upgrade ahead of schedule—and just in time for summer. You can read more about the event here .

Last week, we released the findings of a year-long study to determine whether personal care products and pharmaceuticals are present in the City's water supply. Using advanced testing techniques that can detect compounds at extremely small concentrations, we detected trace amounts of 16 compounds that pose no public health risk. That's great news for the 9 million New Yorkers who need our drinking water every day. You can read more in this week's feature story, and read the entire report here .

Last week was also an important one for air quality—in Brooklyn, and Citywide. On Thursday, I was joined by State Senator **Marty Golden**, City Councilmember **Vincent Gentile**, Chair of Community Board 10 **Joanne Seminara**, and District Manager **Josephine Beckmann** at the Owls Head Wastewater Treatment Plant in Brooklyn to activate two new carbon filters. The combined 4,600 hundred pounds of carbon in these filters will reduce hydrogen sulfide—the primary odor compound in sewage—by 90% from 2006 levels. In 2006, **Mayor Bloomberg** committed that he would work aggressively to eliminate odors at the Owl's Head plant; the carbon filters, and the commissioning of a state-of-the-art residuals handling building before the end of the year will meet that commitment. Thanks to Deputy Commissioner

On Friday, I testified in support of City Council legislation that would significantly reduce the sulfur content of heating oil, and require that a minimum of 2% of all heating oil used in the City be biodiesel. With this legislation, DEP will be able to take the steps necessary to eliminate the burning of the dirtiest fuel oil within a few years—substantially reducing air pollutants like particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and sulfur oxides, which are all associated with negative health impacts, including decreased lung function, aggravated asthma, and respiratory symptoms. The biodiesel requirement in the bill will increase demand for the yellow grease that the City's 22,000 restaurants produce every day—which means less illegal grease dumping in our sewers, fewer sewer backups, and less wasted manpower and wear-and-tear on our infrastructure. We hope the Council will act on the bill quickly. This was the last City Council hearing (for now) for **Rit Aggarwala**, Director of the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability. Rit is a primary author of PlaNYC and he and his team have been working hard since 2007 to implement PlaNYC's 127 initiatives. We'll miss Rit as he heads to California, but we'll be sure to build on the foundation he laid as we move aggressively to improve our water infrastructure and open 90% of New York City's waterways to recreation.

Focus on the Field



In a city like New York, it's hard to miss the little things. There's a lot of noise, a lot of distraction, and sometimes a little silver box sitting on top of a pedestal on the sidewalk just really can't compete with, say, the neon lights of Times Square. But, maybe these small silver boxes—that are actually Water Quality Sampling Stations—should stand out more: after all, there are 965 of them throughout the city, and they all help us ensure that New York City's water remains safe and healthy.

Dave Ramkirath, Water Ecologist, knows about the hundreds of Water Quality Sampling Stations. Working for **Arthur Tringali**, Distribution Water Quality (DWQ) Field Supervisor, **Virginia Murray**, Deputy Chief of DWQ Field Operations, **Salome Freud**, Chief of DWQ Operations, **Steve Schindler**, Director of Water Quality, and the Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Water Supply, **Paul Rush**, Dave

conducts field tests throughout the five boroughs, measuring pH levels, temperature, residual chlorine, ortho-phosphate, specific conductance and other factors to certify that our drinking water is absolutely safe. Dave performs testing at six to seven sampling stations a day, or about 7,800 tests every year.

So far, his most challenging assignment was when he was shadowed by the Environmental Protection Agency. It's happened twice so far in his career, and Dave "had to ensure that I performed my tasks correctly, and paid strict attention to the guidelines as stipulated in the standard operating procedure." "These officials not only worked alongside me, they evaluated my job performance and submitted a written report," says Dave. Even though he was having every move scrutinized, Dave has successfully endured these random audits.

Dave graduated from Queens College in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Chemistry. In his spare time, Dave likes to lift weights, listen to music, and keeps up with new developments in Chemistry. He'll also occasionally sneak in an episode of NCIS or Smallville.

Event Calendar:

Special Event: June 10; 10am to 12pm; 3rd Floor Cafeteria

Jane LaTour, journalist and labor activist will discuss her book, "SISTERS IN THE BROTHERHOODS: "Working Women Organizing for Equality in New York City." [🔗](#)

EHS SURVEY - We need to hear from you!

As you may be aware, an Employee EHS survey questionnaire was distributed electronically last week with a memo from the Commissioner. Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey. Your answers, ideas and opinions are important to gauge the overall effectiveness of the EHS program and help to make it more successful. All answers are confidential and results will be communicated to all DEP employees after they have been tabulated. Here is the link to the survey: [🔗](#). Response deadline is June 18th.

EHS & EOM Awards

As outlined in the Weekly Pipeline, Extra Edition, in recognition of June as National Safety Month, we are dedicating the May Employee of the Month awards and our June ceremony to employees who have made significant contributions to advancing Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) in their unit, bureau or agency as a whole. [🔗](#)

Ask Cas

askcas@dep.nyc.gov [🔗](#)

- Q.** I didn't realize water from a fire hydrant is potable. Can you explain why it is not considered non-potable? **Michelle A. Rodden**, BWS, Laboratory Director
- A.** Last week's AskCas response mentioned how we can connect our NYC Water-on-the-Go stations to fire hydrants to provide New Yorkers with great tasting drinking water at special events and in public venues [🔗](#). Fire hydrants are connected to the same water mains which service your drinking water supply, and therefore hydrant water is subject to the same rules and regulations as drinking water under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Although flushing a hydrant may stir up the water and cause it to become temporarily discolored, there is no health hazard associated with the discolored water. It is always advisable to flush a hydrant using low velocity for several minutes until the water runs clear. Low velocity flushing removes the sediment, clears the stagnant water trapped in the hydrant, and ensures a fresh drinking water supply. To make sure the drinking water looks as good as it tastes, hydrants are always flushed before we use them for drinking water purposes

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tained in one over-the-counter tablet. These results—along with the hundreds of thousands of tests DEP does each year on the water supply—should reassure everyone that NYC's water is still the best in the world. This important study was a team effort led by DWQSR and DWQO, including **Dave Lipsky**, Chief, Distribution Water Quality Science and Research, **Carla Glaser**, Section Chief, Distribution Water Quality and Planning, **Ian Hurley**, Deputy Chief, Distribution Water Quality Laboratory Operations, and **Tim Martin**, Research Scientist. Read

more about it in the New York Post [🔗](#) or in our press release [🔗](#).

The PPCP report was released along with the annual Drinking Water Supply and Quality Report that updates DEP account holders and New Yorkers on the state of the water supply. The report includes comprehensive information on the various programs (such as land acquisition) and ongoing capital improvements (like the Croton Water Filtration Plant) that benefit the City's water supply. Read the complete report online [🔗](#).

Milestones

Congratulations to the following DEP employees for their years of service: **Gennaro Vasaturo**, BWSO, 42 years; **Magdi Farag**, BWSO, 40 years; **Angelo Barca**, BWS, **Joseph Landau**, BWS, and **Monaca Roth**, ACCO, each with 35 years; **Elsa Badia (Frias)**, BWT, **Edward Hayes**, BCS, **Andrew Moss**, ACCO, and **Florence Sayers**, BCS, each with 30 years of service.

Congratulations to the following graduates: **Alexa Silverstein**, BCS, Queens College, B.A. in Psychology and Sociology, and **Erica Dilan**, BCS, Hunter College, B.A. in English. **Mark S. Newman**, BWS, Mercy College, School of Business, Master of Science in Organizational Leadership (MSOL)

Best wishes to the following DEP June retirees: **Parnell Williams**, BWT and **John Clark**, BWSO

Congratulations to **Jenson George**, BWT Electrical section, whose wife Mary gave birth to a baby girl, **Taniya**, on May 27th 2010 – all are doing well.

Abigaille Taylor, BWT, is leaving DEP for a special assignment for the military as of June 3 or 4. We wish her all the best.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov. [🔗](#)