

Laying the Foundation for Streamlined Capital Planning

Running a multi-billion dollar construction program and managing thousands of capital assets at DEP's operating facilities is a critical function for the agency. Effectively doing so ensures that DEP's equipment functions reliably, protects the agency's employees, and is built cost-effectively so DEP can provide a world-class service at a fair price to New Yorkers.

The Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction (BEDC) has been responsible for monitoring the condition of DEP's assets, planning their replacement cycles, and designing and constructing projects to meet new state or federal mandates. BEDC has done a terrific job managing DEP's vast infrastructure, but there are always ways to streamline operations to make them more efficient and productive. Since DEP's operations person-



nel in the Bureaus of Water Supply (BWS), Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) and Wastewater Treatment (BWT) are directly accountable for day-to-day maintenance of DEP's assets, it follows that they should also be accountable for capital planning and asset management.

BWT has already made some significant changes to accommodate this new responsibility. In July, BWT rolled out their new Capital Planning and Asset Management Program for Wastewater Treatment, and three former members

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Spotlight on Safety

Keep on Top of Changes that Could Affect Your Safety

Even though certain job tasks may be routine, over time changes may be implemented that could affect your safety as well as your co-workers. Some examples of this include:

- New standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- New equipment may be installed or old equipment may be upgraded
- New employees may join the work team, and some of them may be inexperienced in the areas of safety hazards and precautions
- New chemicals or materials may be brought into your work environment

In addition, over the course of a workday, trash or other debris may build up and possibly cause a fire hazard. Or a co-worker might leave items lying around temporarily that could create a tripping hazard. Someone might spill something and fail to clean it up right away, which may cause a slipping hazard.

It's up to all of us to be aware of our surroundings on a regular basis. Just because a hazard wasn't there yesterday or an hour ago doesn't mean it isn't there now. Keep your eyes open and stay alert.

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

On Wednesday, I attended the 2010 Watershed Science and Technical Conference at West Point, organized by the New York Water Environment Association. This annual meeting is co-sponsored by DEP and focuses on cutting-edge watershed protection developments. Executive Director **Patricia Cerro-Rehill** was a great host, and **Jim Tierney**, Assistant Commissioner of Water Resources at State DEC, challenged the group to make sure that we continue to make smart decisions based on the best science. My presentation, which you can see here [🔗](#), explored whether the partnership and collaboration that define our approach to watershed protection can be adapted to address the water quality challenges we face in the city—like stormwater management and nutrient removal. The agreement to dramatically reduce nitrogen loadings and restore marshland in Jamaica Bay that **Mayor Bloomberg** announced in February shows that partnership is a viable approach—and we'll need all of the creativity and open-mindedness that DEC, the EPA and the many environmental stakeholders we work with can bring to bear for it to work on a larger scale.

Thanks to West Point graduate and now DC for Water Supply **Paul Rush**, I was taken on a brief tour by Lieutenant **Owen Meyer**, including a visit to the Cadet Barracks and Mess Hall. It's a stirring setting—and you can just glimpse the Hudson River Drainage Chamber of the Catskill Aqueduct looking north from the waterfront. Where the aqueduct crosses the Hudson is the deepest infrastructure in DEP's portfolio.

On the theme of regulatory partnership, last week, DEP submitted comments to the EPA's proposed amendments to the Water Quality Standard regulation, a section of the Clean Water Act. DC for Sustainability **Carter Strickland** stressed two points: First, we agree with EPA that improving harbor water quality is imperative, but a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work given the incredible diversity of watersheds

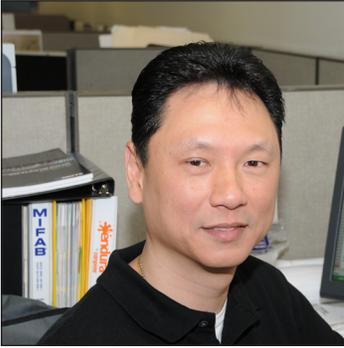


across the country—including New York City. Second, if and when EPA does change water quality regulations, they must come with substantial federal funding to support implementation. Since 2002, of the \$6.3 billion that DEP invested to upgrade wastewater treatment plants to meet new standards, only \$41 million, or 0.64%, was paid for with federal grants. You can read DEP's entire submission here [🔗](#). We also commented on EPA's draft "Coming Together for Clean Water" strategy that includes some exciting ideas about green infrastructure, market-based initiatives, and voluntary approaches to compliance that we look forward to working with EPA to implement in the coming months. You can read EPA's draft clean water strategy here [🔗](#) and our comments here [🔗](#).

We experienced quite a storm last week. Though it passed quickly, it knocked out power at some of our plants and unloaded a tremendous volume of rain in a matter of minutes. A special thank you to our BWT operators at Port Richmond, Coney Island and Owls Head, who restored power and kept disruption to a minimum; and to our BWSO team for quickly responding to flooding and catch basin complaints as they came up. Once again, DEP performed well under extremely difficult circumstances.

Last Tuesday, DEP welcomed 13 veterans from the Wounded Warriors Project who fished on the Schoharie Creek. They, like countless other New Yorkers, came to take advantage of some of the numerous recreational opportunities that exist on our upstate lands, such as fishing, boating, hiking and hunting. We were honored to have them and thank them for their service.

Focus on the Field



New York City has some of the best food on earth. However, the cooking process produces some undesirable leftovers—and not the kind that go home with you in a doggy bag! Cooking oils and animal fats, which we collectively refer to as grease, can clog sewer piping if it's washed directly down the drain by restaurants. This can cause sewage to back up into homes and businesses, and require costly emergency work by DEP crews. Grease can also end up in our waterways after a rainstorm.

That's why DEP relies on **Jason Tso**—an Associate Engineering Technician in BWT's Division of Pollution Control and Monitoring, under the general direction of Division Chief **Leslie Lipton**—to inspect food establishments throughout the five boroughs. Jason, who joined DEP in May

2004, determines whether these businesses have adequately sized grease interceptors on their kitchen plumbing. He also checks to see if their interceptors are being properly maintained. Jason issues Commissioner's Orders when corrective actions are required. If a business doesn't comply with the city's sewer ordinance, Jason has the authority to issue a Notice of Violation, which carries a monetary penalty, and he represents DEP at Environmental Control Board hearings.

Just think about how many different kinds of restaurants and commercial kitchens there are in New York City. Jason inspects a variety every day: "One day I can be inspecting a deli, pizzeria and bakery. The next day, it can be a top restaurant, hospital, school, and hotel." Jason appreciates the importance of keeping an eye on the city's eateries. "Properly maintaining grease interceptors not only benefits the community, it benefits the environment as well."

When he's not patrolling the city's famed restaurants, Jason devotes most of his time to his six-year-old daughter, **Ellie**.

Did You Know?

... that ozone gas technology was originally installed at the Wards Island Wastewater Treatment Plant in 1938 to handle odors? Fresh air was first passed through a dryer, then moved across high-voltage electrodes to convert atmospheric oxygen (O₂) to ozone (O₃). In conjunction with activated carbon, the ozone system at Wards Island successfully controlled odors at the sludge storage tank. Ozone systems were subsequently installed in the late 1940s at the Owls Head plant, in the 1950s at the Coney Island plant, and in the early 1970s at the Jamaica, Rockaway, 26th Ward, Oakwood Beach and Port Richmond plants. Using ozone for odor control fell out of favor due to high energy consumption and the fact that ground-level ozone was found to be a contributor to smog. Now the wastewater plants and combined sewer overflow facilities use chemical scrubbers and activated carbon to reduce odors.

Election Day is November 2 – Register to Vote Now

Tuesday, November 2, is Election Day, and it's more important than ever that each and every New Yorker have their voices heard. If you've yet to register to vote, there is still time. Simply pick up a form from any of our Bureau of Customer Services locations or visit the NYC Board of Elections website here [🔗](#). The deadline to register to vote in the 2010 general election is October 8.

Kudos Corner



BWS Summer Intern **Cailee Nicole** took this great shot of a rainbow over the East Basin of the Ashokan Reservoir. Nice job!

Last week's DEP Blood Drive collection totaled 475 pints for all locations. Thanks to all who made this such a successful effort, including Director of Employee Benefits **Arlene Siegel-Fishman**; **Malini Strickland**, Supervisor for Workers' Compensation; **Paula Miritello** of BWS who coordinated all the BWS blood drive locations; and all the blood captains. Thanks also to the Facilities Management staff who made sure the rooms were cleaned and set up before and after the drive, and to **Izzy Diunte** for providing his usual assistance.

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of BEDC—Administrative Engineers Jim Mueller and **Keith Mahoney** and Associate Project Manager **Mauro Orpianesi**—joined BWT to take charge of this new endeavor with the assistance of some BWT staff who are rounding out the new team. They have already begun to evaluate assets, formulate business cases for cost-effectively bundling equipment replacement, develop strategies for the CSO and Nitrogen programs, and coordinate design and construction objectives with BEDC and BEPA.

The City has invested more than \$5 billion in wastewater treatment since 2002, enabling DEP's treatment plants to collectively achieve monthly-average secondary treatment standards for the first time in 2010, a full three years ahead of schedule. "Managing these investments to ensure their long-term operability is a top priority, second only to the safety of our employees and

the public," said DC **Vincent Sapienza**. "Our sewage treatment workers, engineers, oilers and skilled trades staff do a remarkable job in maintaining these assets, but, at some point, replacement becomes necessary. We must be smart about what we plan and design, and have rigorous project controls on cost and schedule. I'm confident that the in-house team that BWT is building will successfully achieve our objectives."

Because of those investments, and the operators that run and maintain them, NYC's waterways are cleaner now than they've been in more than 100 years. And by taking steps to manage the agency's capital program in a way that further taps into the tremendous internal expertise in our operating bureaus, we'll continue to build upon these achievements so that New York Harbor gets even better.

Event Calendar:

Visit DEP's Water-On-the-Go fountains at these great events:

Brooklyn Flea: 176 Lafayette Ave; September 25; 11 am – 4 pm

New York Cycle Club Escape New York at Sakura Park: September 25; 6 am – 11 am

Atlantic Antic: Atlantic Ave & Court St, Atlantic Avenue & Bond St; September 26; 10 am – 6 pm

For more information on these events, please see DEP's Water-On-the-Go calendar [🔗](#).

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