

## Special Guest Commissioner's Corner

**Paul Rush**, DEP's Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Water Supply, is a guest commentator this week.

Last week, the Bureau of Water Supply began drawing down Cannonsville Reservoir in response to an ongoing turbid discharge from a rock embankment below Cannonsville Dam. The turbid flow below the dam was discovered when workers were drilling borings in preparation for design and construction of the future hydroelectric facility to be built there.

The Bureau's investigation indicated that the drilling released ground water under pressure, known as an artesian condition, several dozen feet below surface level, causing an upward flow of water and sediment that is reaching the West Branch Delaware River below Cannonsville Dam.

Since this happened, DEP has met with its regulators, consulting



engineers and other experts to further investigate the condition, and to identify the next steps for monitoring and repair. In addition to steadily reducing storage at Cannonsville Reservoir, DEP has taken several steps to minimize the potential risks for those living downstream. These include 24-hour monitoring by employees at the site, regular analysis of dam-safety instrumentation, and testing of the turbid sediment to identify and understand its origin. DEP Police have also helped with



additional patrols and a camera system that is sending round-the-clock video of the dam to our water supply control center.

Importantly, DEP has also moved to expedite the necessary repair work. This week, a contractor with extensive dam experience will be onsite to begin repairs that will end the turbid discharge and seal off the original bore holes that created the flow. It is anticipated that this work—led and overseen by the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction—will continue into the month of August.

While the turbid condition does not pose an imminent threat to the safety of the dam or the reliability of New York City's water supply, DEP has worked hard to get information out across multiple platforms in the

Delaware River Valley. Federal, state, county and local officials—including those from New Jersey and Pennsylvania—have been made aware of the condition. This includes emergency management officials from each state and county. DEP continues to host a series of public meetings to inform downstream residents of the condition, the monitoring and the repair work. We are pushing out updated information every day on the agency's website and through social media. That information can be [found here](#).

Thanks to a team effort from our engineers, planners, police, technicians, procurement experts and other watershed staff, DEP is smoothly working through this challenge toward a quick and effective repair.

## Spotlight on Safety

### Keeping Cool in the Heat

Each year, thousands of workers become sick from over exposure to heat hazards. Most heat related injuries or deaths occur within the first week of a heat wave, so it is important to work slowly during these times to allow the body to adjust to higher temperatures. The most important signs of a hazardous heat environment are:

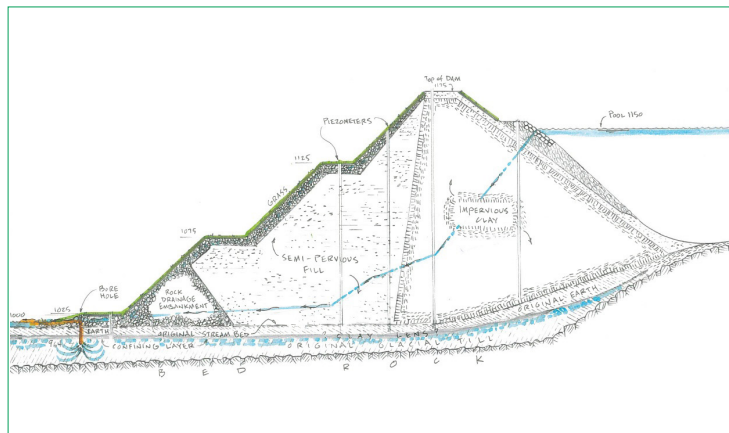
1. Humidity higher than 40%
2. Working in direct sunlight
3. Temperatures higher than 90° Fahrenheit

These three conditions can raise the heat index to unsafe levels. The heat index is "how hot it feels".

[OSHA's Heat Illness Prevention Campaign](#) is entering its 4<sup>th</sup> year this summer, and with it comes new resources for workers and managers. The campaign emphasizes three precautions to prevent avoidable injuries: "Water, Rest, and Shade". Also, OSHA has released a smart phone app called "OSHA Heat Safety Tool" intended to quickly convey the risk level due to high heat indexes, available on Android and iPhone.

For more information on working safely in the heat see [DEP's Exposure to Extreme Heat and Cold Guidance](#) and [OSHA Quick Card: Heat Stress](#).

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.





## Invasive Species Education



Earlier this month, DEP joined a statewide effort to educate New Yorkers about invasive species, their effects on our ecosystems, and what citizens can do to prevent their spread across the watershed and other parts of the state. As part of New York Invasive Species Awareness Week, DEP set up education tents at four farmers' markets in towns adjacent to the City's reservoir system. As the effects of invasive species continue to be seen throughout the state, DEP has continued to protect the watershed through education and outreach efforts, surveys to identify new infestations early, and control projects to suppress the growth of priority invasive species that could threaten water quality by hampering or changing forest regeneration, or affecting the ecology of watershed streams and reservoirs.

New York State's Invasive Species Awareness Week was established in 2014 to promote knowledge about invasive species, to help stop their spread by engaging citizens in a wide range of activities, and to encourage New Yorkers to take action. For its part, DEP shared information about invasive species at four farmers' markets that were staffed by DEP employees and interns from Ulster County Community College. Students from the college have assisted DEP with its invasive species outreach and fieldwork for several years.

Because the spread of invasive species poses a risk to New York City's reservoirs and the forest lands that protect clean water, DEP has long administered programs to prevent, detect and remove them. DEP was among the first groups in New York to require steam cleaning for all boats entering its waters.

New York City reservoirs are regularly surveyed for aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels, hydrilla and water chestnut. Particular focus is given to the areas where new invaders are most likely to be introduced, such as boat launches or areas where tributaries enter the reservoirs. When a species is detected, plans are immediately developed to control or remove it.

DEP is also working to mitigate the impacts of the emerald ash borer, an invasive beetle that kills ash trees. The emerald ash borer was detected around Ashokan Reservoir in 2010. Several thousand beetle-infested ash trees were removed through timber harvests while the wood retained its value, allowing the trees to be used for cabinetry, wood flooring and other products.

[Recent legislation has made it illegal to buy, sell or transport 126 invasive species in New York, including Japanese knotweed, hydrilla and Eurasian boars.](#)

For more information [click here](#).

## High Bridge Festival



After being closed for 40 years, New York City's oldest standing bridge, the High Bridge, reopened to the public in June. This Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, the High Bridge Festival will celebrate the bridge's restoration with family friendly activities on the bridge's Manhattan and Bronx sides. During the festival, DEP's Education team will oversee the creation of a community mural that will commemorate the bridge's original purpose as part of the Croton Aqueduct water supply system. Water-On-the-Go staff will also be busy providing festival attendees with New York City's top quality drinking water. The event is free and will occur rain or shine between 12 and 4pm. [Click here](#) for more information.

## Put a Cap on It!



While it may be tempting to cool yourself off by opening a fire hydrant, illegally opened hydrants can lower local water pressure, hinder the efforts of firefighters, and endanger the lives of children who may be propelled into traffic by the force of the water. City-approved spray caps can be installed on any fire hydrant to produce a circular spray of cool water, reducing output to a safe level while still providing relief from the heat! Adults 18 and older can get a spray cap, free of charge at [local firehouses](#).

If you observe a running fire hydrant, or are experiencing low or no water pressure, notify [311](#).

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