

Commissioner's Corner



Vincent Sapienza
Commissioner

From the time the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DEP agreed to the construction of Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) retention facilities as part of the Superfund Cleanup of the Gowanus Canal, the City has had the following goals:

- A cleaner and healthier Gowanus Canal
- Protect and expand the limited open space that is currently available to the community
- Minimize disruption to residents and businesses

In order to best meet these goals, the parties agreed to site one of

the facilities adjacent to the east side of the head end of the canal, bounded by Butler, Nevins and Degraw Streets (a second facility is to be constructed on City-owned land at 5th Street and 2nd Avenue). Building alongside the Canal means the facility would be immediately adjacent to the existing DEP sewage pump station, making construction and operation simpler, less expensive, and less disruptive to the community. It also preserves the Double D Pool and Thomas Greene Playground, the original site proposed by EPA for the facility, and allows for the construction of new publicly accessible open space atop the facility.

Recently, a Brooklyn Supreme Court Judge approved New York City's petition to permanently acquire two properties (242 Nevins

Street and 234 Butler Street) to allow for the construction and installation of the underground CSO facility. The Court also approved the City's petition to acquire, for a term of eight years, a third property—270 Nevins Street—to serve as a staging area for construction. Once the Court's order approving the petition has been entered by the court clerk, the City will proceed to formally acquire the properties. It is expected that the acquisition process will be completed within a month of the entry of the order. The parties will continue to negotiate towards a final price for each property. If negotiations are not successful, the Court may determine the final price.

Once the City formally owns the properties, the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) will act as the landlord for the current tenants at 242 Nevins Street and 234 Butler Street. HPD has already been on site and met with several of the

tenants. The tenants will need to relocate by the spring of 2019 to allow site work to begin and HPD will administer relocation benefits. The City has also retained the services of Cornerstone, a prominent relocation firm, to assist the tenants in finding alternative spaces.

270 Nevins Street will serve as a staging area during construction and therefore the current tenant will have more time before they must relocate. The City's Economic Development Corporation is working to ensure a smooth transition for the tenant.

DEP will be meeting with Community Board 6's Parks/ Recreation and Environmental Protection Committee on October 17, where the design team will present schematic designs for the head house, open space, and historic preservation. I'd like to thank all the DEP staff who have worked to advance this important project.

Spotlight on Safety

Fire Prevention

This week is National Fire Prevention Week (FPW) (October 7–13). This year's FPW campaign, "Look. Listen. Learn. Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere," works to educate people about three basic, but essential, steps to take to reduce the likelihood of having a fire—and how to escape safely in the event of one:

- **LOOK** for places that a fire could start.
- **LISTEN** for the sound of the smoke alarm.
- **LEARN** two ways out of every room.

Remember to regularly examine work areas to identify potential fire hazards such as improper storage of combustible material, overloading of extension cords, surge protectors and damaged wires. In the event of a fire you should notify other employees, contact the fire department, and evacuate immediately. Employees should be familiar with their workplace evacuation plan and can reference DEP's [Emergency Planning Policy](#) for additional information.

For more information on fire safety and prevention, visit the [National Fire Protection Association](#) website.

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. HELP IS ON THE WAY.



In the News



Commissioner **Sapienza** and **Alan Cohn**, managing director of Integrated Water Management for BEPA, were recently featured in a [New York Times](#) piece describing DEP's work with Copenhagen to study the effects of cloudbursts, or heavy downpours, which are projected to increase with climate change. The goal of the study aimed to assess risks, prioritize responses, develop neighborhood-based solutions, and assign costs and benefits for managing cloudbursts, particularly in urban areas like New York City. As a result of the findings, DEP is moving forward with a cloudburst infrastructure pilot project in southeast Queens.

DEP Hosts Archtober



The Newtown Creek Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility was featured last Thursday as Archtober's 'Building of the Day.' The month-long event celebrates NYC's architecture and design and includes hundreds of events, tours, and exhibitions organized by more than 60 partners across the five boroughs. The [sold-out tour](#) of Newtown was a huge hit and featured special guest **James Stewart Polshek** of Polshek Partnership (now Ennead Architects), the architectural firm that designed the plant and its eight iconic futuristic, stainless steel-clad digester eggs. A sincere thanks to Deputy Commissioner **Pam Elardo** and BWT staff, including **Steve Cubero**, for helping to facilitate the tour.

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

Water Main Upgrade for Pelham



A BWSO Field Operations team recently completed the replacement of a 2-inch water main servicing several homes in the Pelham section of the Bronx. The water main had suffered from age related leaks, so 930-feet of new 4-inch ductile iron water main was installed, including valves and other hardware. The rather large project area presented several challenges, including ground saturation, an abundance of poison ivy, localized traffic conditions, and hot temperatures sometimes reaching over 100 degrees. However, crew members had worked on similar water main installations throughout the city, including Whitestone in Queens, and Banker Street in Brooklyn, so they were well-prepared to tackle this job and complete it in just nine days. A big thank-you to all involved, including **John Castiglione**, **Joseph Sedita**, **Salvatore Gallina**, **Sean Cochrane**, **Michael DiBartolo**, **Anthony Amibile**, **Vishaal Sidoo**, **Joseph Anzelone**, **John Lobello Jr.**, **Steven Gonzalez**, **Tiffany Solivan**, **Cesar Aguilar**, **Angelo Sedita** and **Eric Dellecave**.

Welcome Aboard!



Today, 22 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Director for Human Resources **Herb Roth**, HR Specialist **Grace Franco**, and Project Support Specialist **Adrian Allen**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Norman Smith with BEDC; **Nicholas Lau** with BEPA ; **Nile M. Johnson** with BPAC; **Michael S. Lopena** and **Sheetal G. Patel** with BWS , **Adedoja O. Adeyeye**, **Ariel R. Aranda**, **Issa Diabate**, **Pasaram P. Dipchand**, **Musa T. Ganiyu**, **Joseph A. Murphy**, **Arian Nova**, **George Papoulis**, **Frank C. Scuderi**, **Jun (Trevor) Shao**, and **Farah N. Taufiq** with BWSO; **Justin P. Joseph** and **Rebecca A. Rilling** with BWT; **Adesa Boja** with Commissioner's Office; **Marouso Haniotis** with EHS; **Aisha Dar** with OD&HR; and **Nathaniel J. Kimball** with Sustainability.