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FROM THE COMMISSIONER

One of DEP's most important priorities is the health and safety of its 6,000 employees. In order to help ensure the safety of our employees, DEP is improving its conditions and policies in order to make the working environment safer.

As many of you know, in 2002 DEP created its Office of Environmental Health and Safety Compliance (OEHS), headed by Assistant Commissioner Gerould McCoy. OEHS has worked with the operating bureaus and support staff to implement new policies and practices to ensure the health and safety of agency employees, including an agency-wide audit of facilities both in the City and throughout the City's watersheds. To date, this effort has focused on facilities operated by the Bureau of Water Supply and the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations. I'd like to take the opportunity to draw attention to some additional achievements in the areas of environmental health and safety:

- **Action Items Completion.** The Bureaus of Water Supply and Water and Sewer Operations have continued to complete action items identified during facility audits. By the end of May 2004, BWS had closed 85% of their total overall action items. Over the same time period, BWSO has closed 83% of their total – up from 80% at the end of the previous month. This is difficult and important work, and I commend all staff working to address these items.

- **Staff Training.** By November of 2003, over 4,000 DEP employees had completed their first phase of EHS training, which focused on OSHA and Environmental Awareness and competency in a wide range of areas, such as Fire Prevention, Emergency Action Plans, and Personal Protection Equipment. A second phase of training is underway now, and is expected to be completed by end of June. This training will cover new areas, such as Hazardous Waste Management, and Environmental Incident Reporting and Response.

- **Legacy Project.** DEP has started its Legacy Assessment Program to identify and remediate, when necessary, the presence of lead, mercury, and PCBs at BWS and BWSO facilities. The effort has three major phases: facility records review; facility site sampling and testing/recommendations for corrective actions; and the implementation of any corrective actions. Approximately 361 facilities within BWS and BWSO will be inspected through August 2006.

- **MIS Development.** OEHS, working with the Office of Information Technology, the Bureau of Water Supply, and the Bureau Water and Sewer Operations is developing a new database to track and manage Action Item Tracking (AIT) tables and information from the Agency's Legacy program.

DEP will continue to work to improve conditions at our facilities in the City and upstate. The level of effort that has gone into developing, implementing, and supporting an agency-wide EH&S program has been tremendous, and while we may still have a lot of work ahead of us, I believe we have made considerable progress and achieved a great number of successes.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact DEP's Assistant Commissioner of Environmental Health and Safety Compliance, Gerould McCoy, at x4782. DEP has also established an EH&S hotline for DEP employees, at 800-897-9677.

Very truly yours,

DEP FINALIZES TWENTY-YEAR LEASE FOR LEFRAK TOWERS

As one of New York City's largest and most diverse agencies, DEP has facilities not only throughout the City's five boroughs, but throughout its upstate watersheds, as well. Lefrak City in Queens, has served as the headquarters of DEP's operations since 1990. Today, every bureau and office uses space in the Lefrak High- and Low-rise Buildings, totaling almost 2,000 full- and part-time DEP employees.

As of June 1, 2004, a new 20-year lease with Lefrak's management company went into effect. As part of the new lease, numerous improvements will be made by the Landlord at no cost to the City, including (but not limited to):

- Installation of new, hi-quality insulated windows and new Venetian blinds
- New elevator system and cabs in the High-rise Building
- Installation of security turnstiles in the Low-rise lobby
- Painting of the entire facility, replacement of all wallpaper and lobby signage
- New carpeting and tile throughout the facility and new pantries
- Upgrade in electrical service to the Low-rise Buildings
- Re-surfacing of the rooftop parking area, re-marking parking spaces, and fixing drainage
- Installation of a security booth behind the Low-rise Building

It is important to remember that these improvements will be taking place in phases over the next two years and employees working at, or visiting, Lefrak should prepare for some inconveniences as the buildings are improved. For example, longer waits for the elevators as one cab is taken out of service at a time to be refurbished and other disturbances as walls are repainted and new carpeting is laid down. Once complete, DEP staff can look forward to an improved workplace quality of life.

Many thanks to Rosemarie Subasic and her staff in the Division of Facilities Management and Construction for their hard work in ensuring that the new lease included all of these items and more.



Lefrak High-rise and Low-rise

AN INTERVIEW WITH: SAMAR QANDIL, DEP ARCHIVES

You may not know it, but DEP has thousands of records, some dating back to the 19th century, which record the history of the City's water supply and, in turn, the history of the Agency. These records include photographs, drawings, and blueprints that trace the creation of the engineering marvel that services New York City today. After years of functioning as a repository for all sorts of DEP-related miscellany, the Agency is currently involved in organizing and cataloging the Archive's records, which are currently stored at East 38th Street, within the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations' Manhattan Maintenance Yard. Recently, the DEP Digest took a tour of the Archives and spoke with Samar Qandil, Archive Director.

Q. How did you arrive at DEP, working in the Archives?

A. Actually, I've only been an official employee of DEP since July of last year, although I worked at DEP under contract for two years before that, with the group that curated the "Water-Works" exhibit at Cooper Union. I started out with a degree in Art History, and worked for museums for some time, first in rights and reproductions at the Guggenheim, and then in the photography department at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City. When the contract was awarded for the Cooper Union project, I applied to be part of it.

Q. How has your background in museum collections helped with your work in the DEP Archives?

A. I've had experience working in museums during times of expansion, which was hugely helpful in the initial stages of planning and setting up the Archive. For instance, I've

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surveyed and cataloged collections, and worked to find the most effective use of limited space.

I think I've been fortunate that my experience has taught me about the preservation issues - and how to solve them - something that we face here the Archives.

Q. There's so much material here that's never been systematically cared for or organized. What is it like coming in every day with all of this before you?

A. There's so much to do here, and so much going on right now, that it can really seem overwhelming. A real priority is to gain control over the records here; we're still in the process of organizing everything. Since one of our responsibilities is handling information requests for bureaus like BEE and BWSO, one of our goals is to make the Archives an active and useful resource for the Agency. At the same time, we're working with the Municipal Archives on a project, which includes conservation treatment of our archival records, scanning and photographic services, as well as conservation training for our staff. In addition to that, we have plans to renovate our facility, develop a digital archive to manage critical records, implement an Agency-wide records management database, and make documents available for digital distribution. Every day, there are dozens of different things going on.

Q. After working with the DEP Archives for three years, what's your favorite part of the job?

A. I'd say my one of my favorite things is working with the drawings collections, especially the more historical pieces. Often it gives me the chance to uncover some of the gems of our collection - amazing hand-in-ked drawings from the early days of the water supply. Parts of this collection are very important as early records of civil engineering in the area of water supply with significance beyond the Agency and even the City.

Special thanks also should go to Director of Records and Archives Management Fred Grevin, Charlotte Sims, Harry Dixon, and Nicole Heater for their efforts in managing the DEP Archives for all DEP employees.

DEP's MINORITY- AND WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES PROGRAM PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBCONTRACTORS

Each year, DEP awards an average of more than \$1 billion in construction, construction-related services, and engineering services contracts, making it the largest construction agency in New York City. The Agency Chief Contracting Officer, Carol Fennes, and her staff are responsible for overseeing all of the Agency's procurement functions, and ensuring that our contractors comply with the regulations and standards stated in and applicable to their contracts. Through the ACCO's Office of Contract Compliance, DEP operates the Minority-/Woman-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) program. The program works to ensure that DEP's primary construction and engineering contractors comply with state and federal regulations regarding the participation of M/WBEs in DEP projects that receive funding from federal and state sources. This office also works to encourage minority- and woman-owned businesses to participate in the Agency's contracting process as subcontractors, suppliers, and service providers to the DEP's primary contractors.

DEP's M/WBE program, run by Alan Wasserman, Daniel Katz and Rodney Osborne, concentrates its activities in the areas of developing contacts and resources for minority and woman-owned businesses, conducting outreach on their behalf, providing them with technical assistance, and ensuring DEP's primary contractors are in compliance with M/WBE participation requirements.

DEP's M/WBE program offers technical assistance to smaller M/WBEs, working to make sure they are certified and eligible for participation in DEP projects as subcontractors. In addition to technical assistance, the M/WBE program offers minority- and women-owned businesses a valuable opportunity to expand their network of contacts and potential primary contractors. Program staff works to direct and introduce our primary contractors to qualified and credible M/WBE subcontractors, at times involving specialized M/WBE subcontractors from all over the tri-state area, provided they are New York State-certified.

The M/WBE program is also able to promote primary contractor compliance with M/WBE regulations through development of a Minority/Woman Business Utilization Plan. This plan can then be used to ensure that M/WBE goals are being met. If they are not, DEP works with a contractor to revise their plan for M/WBE involvement. If a contractor fails to act in "Good faith," sanctions may be applied.

As a result of DEP's longstanding efforts, there has been a noticeable improvement in the relationships between primary contractors and M/WBE subcontractors, which manifests itself in long-term, lasting partnerships and, at times, joint ventures on certain projects. DEP has also worked to improve contractors' ability to meet their requirements for M/WBE participation, arriving at creative ways of employing an M/WBE as subcontractor; for example, locating smaller M/WBE to fulfill a service contract (e.g., uniform cleaning, catering, etc.) for a primary contractor.

Over twenty years of DEP's M/WBE program has not only helped minority- and women-owned contractors, but has benefited all regional contractors, as well. Our efforts have enabled new businesses to start up, existing businesses to expand, and provided a future for the growth of the New York City area contracting community. DEP remains committed to increasing the participation of M/WBEs, recently increasing the staff and resources devoted to the program, and will continue to be at the forefront of promoting M/WBE involvement in City projects.



Water Carriage, late 18th century (from DEP Archives)

CONGRATULATIONS!

In the past several months, numerous DEP Staff have achieved accomplishments worthy of note:

- The **Bureau of Customer Services** recently won a key victory in billing litigation with the Amalgamated Warbasse, a large power supply concern, recouping almost \$3 million in outstanding charges. This success was due largely to the efforts of **Victor Lara, Sharandeo Singh, Karen Leclair, Owen Marshall** and **Krishna Persaud**, as well as the inspections performed by **Vincent Garrett**, and the legal work done by **Risa Resnick** and **Karen Zemle**.

- In March, The **Bureau of Wastewater Treatment** received two commendations from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) for using the SHARON process for nitrogen reduction for the first time in the United States, and for developing a biotech solution for frothing.

- In May, **DEP**, the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), received an award from the American Society of Consulting Engineers (ASCE) for their work in Springfield Gardens, Queens, which is improving stormwater management throughout the area.