

New Sewers for SE Queens



Work continues to install storm sewers and catch basins along 119th Avenue between 192nd Street and 195th Street in St. Albans, Queens. DEP engineers leveraged advances in the department's Geographic Information Systems and hydraulic modeling capabilities to arrive at a faster, targeted stormwater solution for this chronically challenging area. In this case, the addition of three blocks of new storm sewers will be connected to 18 street level catch basins and drain the stormwater towards an existing storm sewer located under 192nd Street. The \$1 million project is expected to be completed by the fall. [Click here](#) to see more photos of the construction.

Spotlight on Safety

Diseases in the News: Ebola and Chikungunya

Recent outbreaks of Ebola in West Africa and Chikungunya in the Caribbean have been in the news, and OEHS has received employee queries about them. To date, there have been no cases of Ebola and only one confirmed case of Chikungunya in the continental U.S. Risks of contracting either disease are extremely low. However, one of the species of mosquito that can transmit Chikungunya is known to inhabit several southern and mid-Atlantic states. As such, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has initiated a surveillance program.

Ebola virus is spread through **direct contact** (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with blood and bodily fluids of an infected carrier. Chikungunya is a virus spread among people

through mosquitos that have been infected from biting a human with the disease. There are no vaccines to prevent infection and no direct treatment methods.

Proper hygiene, such as frequent hand washing, as well as avoiding exposure to carriers of Ebola, is key in preventing transmission of the virus. To prevent Chikungunya, protect yourself from mosquito bites by using insect repellent. If you have recently traveled to West Africa or the Caribbean and believe you have contracted either of these illnesses, seek medical attention immediately to prevent spreading the virus to others. For more information on symptoms, transmission and prevention, visit the following DOHMH sites for [Ebola](#), and [Chikungunya](#).

Commissioner's Corner

Last year, DEP kicked off a \$50 million program to replace inefficient bathroom fixtures at public school buildings throughout the five boroughs. Earlier today, the department announced that nearly 4,000 new, high-efficiency bathroom fixtures have been installed at 28 public school buildings, reducing water consumption at each of the buildings by more than 70 percent and saving almost half a million gallons of water each school day. Work is also underway to upgrade an additional 75 school buildings over the next 10 months, with a goal of reaching 500 buildings, and roughly 40,000 bathroom fixtures, by 2018. In total, the initiative has the potential to reduce water consumption in public schools by 4 million gallons each school day. DEP is funding the program as part of a larger effort to reduce citywide water consumption by five percent ahead of the anticipated shutdown and repair of the Delaware Aqueduct in 2021. The Aqueduct currently conveys roughly half of the city's drinking water.

In addition to helping ensure the city has an adequate supply of healthy drinking water during the temporary shutdown of the Delaware Aqueduct, the five percent reduction in consumption will reduce the amount of electricity, chemicals, and other costs associated with operating the water system. It will also cut carbon emissions from the wastewater treatment process by more than 15,500 metric tons per year, the equivalent




of removing 3,300 cars from the road or planting more than 400,000 trees and letting them grow for ten years.

As part of the larger water conservation initiative, DEP is also working to identify opportunities to conserve water at City-owned properties and facilities. For example, DEP has partnered with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to install activation buttons on spray showers at 400 playgrounds around the city that will save 1.5 million gallons of water a day.

To encourage water conservation in private properties, DEP also created a voucher-based program to replace roughly 800,000 outdated residential toilets with high efficiency models. The new toilet rebate program will build on the success of a similar rebate program that ran from 1994 to 1997 and replaced 1.3 million toilets and reduced citywide water consumption by 90 million gallons per day. As a result of those programs, the transition from frontage billing to metered billing, and the roll out of Automated Meter Readers, overall water use in the city has declined from more than 1.5 billion gallons a day in 1980 to 1.1 billion gallons a day, while the City's population has grown from just over 7.1 million to 8.4 million during the same period.

Visit [Water for the Future](#) to learn more about DEP's conservation efforts, or for more information about the project to repair the Delaware Aqueduct.



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. 

Focus on the Field



DEP is unique among New York City agencies in that it directly bills its customers for the essential services it provides—including a reliable supply of high quality drinking water and the collection and treatment of wastewater. Therefore, DEP makes a concerted effort to be transparent and to communicate to New Yorkers how it spends the revenue it collects. It also means that DEP must ensure that its capital projects—which support its vital missions—are completed on-time and on-budget. **Alice Ferone**, the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction's (BEDC) Acting Director of Contract Support brings an important perspective to her job.

Ferone was born and raised on Staten Island and attended Port Richmond High School. After graduation, she went straight into the professional world and worked in the brokerage industry before joining DEP in 1988. Working out of the Staten Island borough office, Ferone was part of the Bureau of Customer Services' (BCS) permit unit. In this role, she would review and approve applications for tap, meter and sewer work related to new construction or repairs to existing structures. Five years later, she transferred to Lefrak headquarters and took on the role of chief of staff to BCS's Director of Field Operations. She later became the manager of the Queens and Manhattan borough offices and then the director of the correspondence unit, before joining BEDC in 2007. In the role of chief of contract services, Ferone helped to improve the process by which contract change orders are implemented, resulting in a greater than 50 percent decline in the time required to process the

paperwork, which helps to keep capital projects moving forward.

"Working for BCS I often spent time working closely with customers to untangle billing histories, set up payment plans and resolve assorted concerns," said Ferone. "Now with BEDC, I'm involved with investing the revenue DEP collects from customers to support our mission and it's always at the forefront of my thoughts to do all we can to control costs and keep our projects on-time and on-budget."

Over the last few years, Ferone began taking evening and weekend classes at Queens College and last year she graduated magna cum laude with a degree in public administration. Recently, she also took on her current title and additional responsibilities, including overseeing contract procurement and invoice processing for BEDC.

"Alice has demonstrated the ability to identify a problem and then develop and implement a process to help correct it," said BEDC Acting Deputy Commissioner **Gerry Cox**. "Change orders will always be a part of capital projects, which is why Alice's work to help implement them more efficiently is so critical to our ability to deliver completed projects to the operating bureaus."

Ferone now calls the Whitestone neighborhood home though during the summer months she spends as many weekends as she can on Fire Island. She also enjoys the many cultural opportunities the city offers, including Broadway shows and museums. Ferone is a certified open water scuba diver, a former six-time competitive body building champion and is currently pursuing a certification to be a personal trainer

Emerging Leaders Network



DEP's Emerging Leaders Network connects young professionals across the agency to foster opportunities for knowledge sharing, professional development, and mentorship. The group recently hosted a Microsoft Excel training and a seminar on the City's civil service system. They also host social events, including a bowling night planned for later this month. [Email](#) us for more information, or to learn how you can get involved.

Greenpoint Mural Comes to Life



Earlier today, Groundswell, in partnership with The Greenpoint Chamber of Commerce and DEP, unveiled a monumental public mural, entitled "Our Journey to Clean Water," celebrating Greenpoint's history of environmental justice activism and highlighting the importance of watershed stewardship. [Click here](#) to see more photos of the mural making process.

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