

Whale Spotted Near Lady Liberty



Photo Credit: Instagram/Daniel Gallagher

A whale spotted in New York Harbor last Thursday near the Statue of Liberty serves as proof that DEP's remarkable efforts have made New York City's waterways the healthiest they have been in more than 100 years. And, on Saturday, a fisherman was surprised when a whale surfaced among the waves off of Staten Island's South Shore. In recent years, at least seven species of whales, including humpbacks, have also been spotted in the New York Bight, an indent in the coastline that runs from Long Island to Cape May, NJ. The successful transformation of the City's harbor can largely be attributed to the billions of dollars DEP has invested in wastewater treatment—the pipes, pumps, tanks, equipment, and personnel—to keep our waters clean.

Spotlight on Safety

Portable Ladder Safety

Portable ladders include step, straight, combination and extension ladders. Working on portable ladders presents the potential for fall hazards and serious injury if proper precautions are not taken. However, ladder injuries are preventable in the workplace. Typically, ladder accidents occur from using the wrong type of ladder for the job, using damaged ladders, incorrect use of ladders, and incorrect placement of ladders.

Be sure to follow these guidelines to stay safe while using a ladder:

- Use a ladder that is appropriate for the job
- Use a ladder only on a stable and level surface, always maintain a 3-point (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) contact on the ladder when climbing
- Do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder
- Do not use the top step/rung of a ladder as a step/rung unless it was designed for that purpose

For more information visit on OSHA's [QuickCard](#).

Special Guest Commissioner's Corner

Eric Landau, DEP's Deputy Commissioner for Public Affairs and Communications, is a guest commentator this week.

DEP continues to move forward with our water conservation efforts as part of a \$1.5 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for more than nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. As part of this initiative, DEP has begun a project to repair leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct that supplies roughly half of the city's daily drinking water. In order to complete these repairs to the Aqueduct, the tunnel must be temporarily shut down in 2022. Ahead of the planned shutdown, DEP aims to reduce citywide water consumption by five percent.

Achieving a reduction in citywide water consumption depends on the success of innovative programs such as DEP's Rain Barrel Giveaway—and I am pleased to report that we distributed a record-setting 11,111 rain barrels to New York City homeowners in 2016. The 60-gallon rain barrels are easy to install and connect directly to a property owner's downspout to capture and store the stormwater that falls on the rooftop. The water collected in the rain barrel can then be used to water lawns and gardens, or for other outdoor chores. Rain barrels can help reduce a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months.

The rain barrels have the capacity to collect over 600,000 gallons of stormwater each time it rains, keeping the precipitation out of the City's sewer system and improving the health of local waterways. Over the last several years, DEP has distributed thousands of rain barrels to New York City homeowners free of charge

at events held in conjunction with local elected officials and community organizations. This year's total more than doubles the 5,250 rain barrels given away in 2015.

The Rain Barrel Giveaway Program is part of New York City's Green Infrastructure Program that aims to capture stormwater before it can ever enter the sewer system and thereby reduce combined sewer overflows into local waterways. In 2016, 62 rain barrel giveaway events were held: 23 in Brooklyn, 5 in the Bronx, 26 in Queens, and 8 in Staten Island. DEP has committed to invest \$2.4 billion in green infrastructure projects as well as other source controls, such as rain barrels, to significantly reduce combined sewer overflows by 2030.

Creating and implementing smart, money-saving, environmentally-friendly conservation efforts such as the Rain Barrel Giveaway will help DEP realize its goal of reducing citywide water consumption by five percent. I'd like to point out that the success of this program relies, in part, on the partnerships forged with elected officials and community organizations, which co-host the giveaway events. I want to especially thank the Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications for building and fostering strong relationships with these 52 elected officials and nine community organizations throughout the city. I'd also like to thank the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment for storing the barrels at sites such as Newtown Creek, Wards Island and Hunts Point. The record number of free rain barrels distributed this year underscores the program's importance and raises the benchmark for next year. With that said, my team eagerly looks forward to scheduling more free rain barrel giveaways in 2017.

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.

Environmental Outreach Programs



The Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications (BPAC) conducted environmental outreach programs for the real estate, hotel and hospitality industries November 13–15. BPAC staff distributed compliance information at the NY Co-op and Condo Show at Baruch College, which attracted hundreds of owners, cooperators and real estate managers. HX: The Hotel Experience trade show at the Javits Convention Center drew thousands of attendees from the hospitality and restaurant professions. BPAC staff (**Bruce Macdonald**, **Eva Lynch** and **Thomas Mooney** pictured above) engaged participants in discussions on new air code regulations and offered a sample of New York City's famous, high-quality drinking water.

Be Grateful For What You Have

*A note from **Kaitlyn Maceira**, LMHC, CASAC, with the NYC Employee Assistance Program (NYC EAP)*

We live in a world of more. We want more money, we want more things, we want more time, and we want all of these things right away. By wanting more, instead of adding to what we have, we are in some way wishing it away. We are not paying attention to what we have and we are not being present.

Many of you have heard of the meditation practice called mindfulness, a practice that focuses primarily on being mindful of ourselves, others, our actions, our thoughts and our beliefs. In order to be mindful we must be present. Being present in our daily lives allows us to not only know what we have but also to be grateful for it. Gratitude is a very powerful mental state. Being appreciative of all that you possess adds a positive light to

one's life. One of my go-to therapeutic exercises is to have the client make a gratitude list. The outcome is always significant. It is a simple way to keep yourself grounded and humble. It is not a list for you to share with others, unless you want to, but more importantly, it's a list to help you see all that you have to be grateful for in life.

The start of the holiday season is the best time to reflect. Take some time to be mindful, present, kind and grateful because in a world of more, it can be easy to let the things that you want make you forget the things that you have.

If you or a loved one is in need of support, kindness or information, free and confidential problem-solving services are available at NYC EAP. Contact us by phone at (212) 306-7660 or by email at eap@olr.nyc.gov.

Newtown Creek's Walkway is a Winner



The Waterfront Nature Walk at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant has been [selected by Mayor Bill de Blasio](#) and the Public Design Commission as one of this year's winners of the commission's [prestigious annual Awards for Excellence in Design](#). The project was a collaborative effort between sculptor George Trakas, landscape architect firm Quennell Rothschild & Partners, DEP, the Department of Design and Construction, and the Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program. To experience the gorgeous promenade, be sure to visit the plant at 329 Greenpoint Ave., Brooklyn.

Kudos Corner

Three major events in Manhattan this past month have kept the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) busier than usual. First, BWSO personnel from Manhattan Sewer Maintenance pre-inspected the mile-long Halloween Parade route in Greenwich Village to ensure all DEP assets along the way had proper functionality and stability the night of Oct. 31. Part of the process also included surveying all catch basins to ensure they were clean and prepared to take water. Next, fast-acting BWSO workers from Manhattan Operations responded when a 12-inch valve broke in Central Park the day before the NYC Marathon. When the water condition was discovered Nov. 5 at about 7 a.m. at the West

65th Street Transverse, **Rodney Casillas**, **Mitchell Berlin**, **Mike Perez**, **Robert Barberio**, **Frank Puglisi**, **Jelani Khepera**, **Ivan Dilan**, **Frank Perez**, **William Giles**, and **Ernesto Vasquez** all sprang into action and made the necessary repairs. In fact, the quick-fix was done in time with no impact on the world's biggest road race. Lastly, BWSO staff with Manhattan Sewer Maintenance will conduct another route check this week prior to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, which winds down 2.6 miles from Central Park West and West 77th Street to 6th Avenue and West 34th Street before stopping at the grandstands in Herald Square. Keep up the good work BWSO!

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