

## Commissioner's Corner

As we begin 2017 and continue the important work of protecting public health and the environment, we'd like to look back on some of our accomplishments, projects, and challenges from the past 12 months. Once again, thank you all for your continued hard work. Click [here](#) to see more photos.



In October Mayor **Bill de Blasio** joined Acting Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** and staff from BWSO in activating the new \$250 million water tunnel connecting Brooklyn to Staten Island, ensuring the borough has a safe, reliable drinking water supply. The deeper tunnel—called a siphon—is a critical back-up that can deliver up to 150 million gallons of water per day.



To eliminate leakage in a section of the Delaware Aqueduct, DEP is constructing a 2.5-mile bypass tunnel about 600 feet below the Hudson River, stretching from Newburgh to Wappinger. The new tunnel will be encased in 9,200 feet of steel. In early November, the first batch of massive steel liners arrived at a Hudson River port. In total, the project will require 230 sections of steel liner.



In the fall DEP installed nearly 50,000 oysters in Jamaica Bay—the largest single installation of breeding oysters in New York City. The oyster bed will help to protect the surrounding wetlands from erosion, while also naturally filtering the water in the bay. The installation includes a central donor bed composed of adult and spat-on-shell oysters as well as four smaller receiving beds composed of clam/oyster shell and broken porcelain. The porcelain was harvested from nearly 6,500 inefficient toilets that were recycled from a citywide water conservation program.



Storage in the City's upstate reservoirs dropped far below historic average in 2016 as a drought gripped the watershed and much of the Northeast. This photo shows Schoharie Reservoir, which was all but empty by October. Reservoir storage remains below normal, but rain and snowfall in December caused runoff and reservoir levels to increase slightly.

## Spotlight on Safety

### Staying Healthy In The New Year

At DEP, health and safety on the job are top priorities and, with the start of the New Year, it is a great time to consider what we can do to improve our overall health. Many employees spend significant time doing tasks that are sedentary in nature, such as prolonged sitting at desks. Research indicates that people who spend more than four hours per day sitting may be at greater risk for chronic health conditions. It is important to fit in at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Here are some steps to take to fit in physical activity while on the job:

- Plan for alternative work activities during the course of the

workday to avoid prolonged sitting time.

- Walk down the hall to speak with a colleague about work, instead of calling or e-mailing them.
- Stand or stretch at your desk when you are doing a task, such as talking on the phone.
- Take advantage of DEP sponsored health and wellness programs or think about starting a lunch time walk.

The NYC Parks Department [BeFitNYC](#) website offers many free and low cost options for staying fit in the city. Also, for more information on physical activity guidelines, visit the [CDC's 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 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.

## Training To Trim Watershed Trees



In 2013, the Bureau of Water Supply established an east-of-Hudson tree team that is charged with trimming and removing trees that are growing along the Catskill Aqueduct, atop dams, and along property lines, roadsides and other rights of way. This fall, watershed maintainers on the tree team received an additional 40 hours of training and learned how to safely climb trees using spurs, ropes and harnesses in order to trim their canopies. The workers also learned techniques to properly descend the tree if part of it breaks. These skills are especially important for the removal of trees that are located in hard-to-reach areas that preclude the use of a bucket truck or other equipment.

## Organics Composting Program Expands



DEP has officially launched a composting program that is currently being implemented in the 4th and 5th floor Lefrak Low Rise kitchens and will be expanding today to the 3rd floor Employee Lounge. BEDC's Sustainability Team has been successfully piloting the program for the past two years, and looks forward to implementing the initiative across the entire agency. A marked brown composting bin will be placed near the sink area, alongside the recycling and garbage bins, with signage indicating what lunchtime organics can and cannot be composted. Additionally, larger composting bins will be added to the kitchens on the 4th and 5th floors of the Low Rise building to accommodate the growing participation in the program. Click [here](#) for more information about composting. Any questions or comments are welcome at [composting@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:composting@dep.nyc.gov).

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

## Food Drives Benefit Needy Families



An impressive 1,922 pounds of food was donated by downstate employees to the Food Bank For New York City this past holiday season. The hefty haul converts into 1,602 meals and will help benefit the Food Bank's network of 1,000 soup kitchens and pantries. Additionally, the agency collected 161 coats that will be distributed by [New York Cares](#). Upstate, Kingston held a food drive for families in need while Downsville collected 21 pounds of butter for the local Thanksgiving dinner basket pantry run by the Colchester Community United Methodist Church. And, at Grahamsville, generous food donations were divided among the pantries run by the Grahamsville and Ulster Heights United Methodist Churches to benefit over 130 local families.

