



VIEWS & INFORMATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL & WORKPLACE SAFETY



Serious About Employee Safety: EH&S Policies and Procedures

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THE PURPOSE OF DEP'S ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND

PROCEDURES IS not only to ensure that the Agency is in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, but, equally important, to protect the safety and well being of all DEP's employees, the public, and the environment. Guidelines set by EH&S policies and procedures are crucial to workplace and environmental safety. Following these guidelines, employees practice safe work habits that protect them and the environment in which they work.

We know that wearing seat belts saves lives, but it took some time to make us feel that buckling our seat belts was habitual and automatic, a necessary part of the drive. Even though we weren't born with the instinct to buckle our seat belts, learning to do so was important to our safety and we learned to do it. We changed our culture of driving by cultivating a new, safety driven procedure. Like buckling a seat belt, safe work procedures must be studied and practiced before they become automatic; this goes for safe work procedures at DEP, e.g., those governing Confined Space Entry and Hot Work. DEP has forty-one EH&S policies and procedures that outline what all safety minded and environmentally responsible employees should know and do, step-by-step, to perform their jobs safely. EH&S policies are decision-making tools to help employees understand the best way to proceed when a work situation is unclear.

Knowing and following DEP's EH&S policies and procedures are in every employees best interest and employees are required to follow them. Following them is not an option, though it is always in your best interest. Your safety and well being are important to you and to your facility's operation.



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DEP encourages working safely by recognizing employees who have exceptionally contributed to on the job safety and shown outstanding efforts in complying with EH&S policies and procedures and awarding them \$250.00 in the Serious About Safety awards program established by Commissioner Emily Lloyd. Award recipients and their EH&S achievements are reported in all agency-wide communications, including OEHS's quarterly newsletter V.I.E.W.S., *The DEP Digest*, and on **Health & Safety**, OEHS's intranet website on **Pipeline** where forms can be downloaded to nominate candidates.

EH&S policies and procedures are enforceable and enforced to assure safe working conditions. Employees who do not comply with these policies may be disciplined. Moreover, to promote compliance with policies and procedures and thereby assure a safe work culture at DEP, one thousand supervisors and managers have been trained in disciplinary issues relating to environmental, health and safety policies and procedures to correct dangerous non-compliance before an injury or death occurs or harm is done to the environment.

EH&S disciplinary procedures are not handled any differently than any disciplinary procedures in the Agency, such as time and leave abuse. Upon employment, every employee is issued DEP's Uniform Code of Discipline with the Personnel Handbook. This Code spells out the regulations. The Code, developed by the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel (ODC), advises all employees on the standards of conduct and performance required of them. Supervisors and managers are represented by the ODC when disciplining employees, and they should always consult the ODC for guidance. Non-supervisory personnel should seek support from their unions if disciplinary charges are brought against them.

The rules in the Uniform Code of Discipline are written broadly so that they might be applicable to a wide variety of situations. For example, **Rule E. 18** states: "Employees shall not make any false entry upon any record of the Agency." This rule can per-

tain to doctoring EH&S records or falsifying training attendance sheets. **Rule E. 12** states: "Employees shall not neglect their assigned duty or duties." The rule pertains to EH&S procedures and all bureaus in DEP. There are sections in the Code that bear on the use of Agency property and equipment, such as DEP automobiles, on the responsibilities of supervisory personnel to assure safe working conditions, on health and safety issues, and on compliance with EH&S policies and procedures. Employees should review the Uniform Code of Discipline and understand how it relates to EH&S policies and procedures so that they will be familiar with the Agency's expectations of them in all regards. Employees are encouraged to discuss any issues in the Code with their supervisor for clarification.

It is important in this regard to remember that it is your duty to report employee who do not follows correct procedures as outlined in DEP policies. Failing to do so, or "turning a blind eye," will put you and your co-workers at risk and make **you** liable to disciplinary action. This rule also applies to contractor work because contractors are required to follow DEP EH&S policies. An employee who may feel uncomfortable reporting a breach of a work safety practice may do so confidentially on the EH&S Hotline (800-897-9677) or send an e-mail directly and confidentially (no return will appear) to OEHS via the special link on the Health & Safety Home Page on **Pipeline**.



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Serious About Safety and Eyes on Environmental Awareness Awards

Please join me in congratulating the following four individuals who have received the **October 2005 Serious About Safety and Eyes on Environmental Awareness** Awards for their contributions to making DEP's work practices and facilities safer and for their commitment to environmental excellence.



Mike Principe, Michael Garlinghouse, Theresa Norris, Diane Hammerman, Alfonso Lopez, Commissioner Lloyd, Thomas Anello, and Douglas Greeley

SERIOUS ABOUT SAFETY AWARDS

Thomas Anello, Queens Repair, Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations.

In addition to his regular duties as Superintendent of the Queens Repair facility, Mr. Anello has continued to maintain the facility's excellent environmental, health, and safety compliance ratings from the beginning of the program's inception. His motivation and initiative has allowed the facility to continue to maintain an above-90-percent completion rating for AIT findings and register only 100 total findings to date.

Michael Garlinghouse, West of Hudson Operations, Bureau of Water Supply.

Working with Bureau of Water Supply EH&S staff, Mr. Garlinghouse developed a plan for the installation of evacuation alarms at six West-of-Hudson facilities; these evacuation alarms are connected in real-time to the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to notify the West-of-Hudson Control Center and initiate standard operating procedures for evacuation in case of alarm.

EYES ON ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AWARDS

Diane Hammerman, South Operations, and Theresa Norris, Operations Support, Bureau of Wastewater Treatment.

Over the July 4, 2005 weekend, Ms. Hammerman and Ms. Norris both acted in response to a potential shortage of sodium hypochlorite ("hypo") at the City's wastewater treatment plants, which would have reduced the plants' ability to disinfect wastewater and led to potentially unsafe conditions at the City's beaches. They stayed in personal contact with the City's 14 treatment plants, the agency's supplier of hypo, and BWT management to ensure that plants could maintain effective treatment. In addition, Ms. Norris is currently working with the hypo supplier to develop better communications and procedures to help prevent potential shortages in the future.

Ms. Hammerman and Ms. Norris are the inaugural recipients of the Eyes on Environmental Awareness Award, which is intended to highlight individuals who have continued to exhibit a positive understanding of the impact of their work on the environment while contributing to the Agency's compliance with regulatory requirements.

For more information about this awards program, as well as the Dedicated to Service Award, please check the Commissioner's page on Pipeline.

With best regards,

Emily Lloyd
Commissioner



OEHSC Welcomes New Staff

Doreen J. Bader, Director of EH&S Training, holds an M.S. in Environmental, Occupational and Public Health. She has been with DEP since 1987 in a variety of positions. Her most recent position was a Research Scientist and Environmental Educator with the Bureau of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs in the Education Department.

Denise Clark, Legacy Supervisor, holds B.S. in chemical engineering. She comes to DEP from the NYC Office of the Comptroller where she was a Lead Auditor. From 1994 to 2000, she served as a Program Manager for DEP's Pollution prevention program with the Bureau of Air, Noise, and Hazardous Materials. From 1991 to 1994, she served as an assistant chemical engineer with DEP's Office of Environmental Planning.

James Coats, Legacy Program Project Engineer, holds a B.S. from the University of Florida. Before coming to DEP, he served as an Environmental Consultant at Dorson Environmental, Elmsford, NY and an Industrial Hygienist at Leighton Associates Inc. in Queens.

Allan Straker, Environmental, Health & Safety Training Specialist, holds a B.S. from York College of the City University of New York. In 2004, when a student, he was an Industrial Hygienist Intern assisting at the Bureau of Environmental Compliance where he helped update the chemical inventory of specific facilities in the Citywide Facility Inventory Database. He assisted in conducting technical reviews of various facility annual Right-to-Know program submissions.

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Following EH&S policies and procedures will prevent disciplinary actions. Employees should attend all assigned safety training, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), report any spill of a hazardous substance to supervisors, obtain all necessary environmental or health and safety permits before beginning work, report unsafe work conditions to supervisors or the OEHSC Hotline by phone or through *Pipeline*, and generally follow EH&S policies and procedures as they are outlined in the *Employee Environmental, Health & Safety Handbook*. Copies of policies are also obtainable from Bureau EH&S group, Safety Officers, and Responsible Managers. All EH&S policies and procedures are available on the Health & Safety website on *Pipeline* in PDF format for downloading and printing convenience. Supervisors, incidentally, are charged with the duty to follow EH&S policies and may be brought up on charges if they fail to enforce them.

Remember, these rules are not meant to restrict your work but to secure your safety on the job. The health and safety of DEP's work force is a crucial element to your personal success and the success of the Agency and its mission. Every day on the job, you have an opportunity to show how committed you are to safety—yours and that of your co-workers—and to promote sound environmental work practices.

*With care and concern, you could be the next recipient of the
Serious About Safety Award!*



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Kevin Z. Moore



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