

## Chelsea Schoolyard Goes Green

**D**EP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, The Trust for Public Land New York State Director Carter Strickland, New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, and P.S. 33 Chelsea Prep Principal Cindy Wang recently joined students and faculty to break ground on the construction of a new, state-of-the-art green playground in Chelsea. This [new play space at P.S. 33](#) will serve the school and surrounding community, and bring nearly 30,000 residents within a 10-minute walk of a park. Once completed, the \$1.16 million playground will include a running track, turf field, basketball practice hoops, soccer field, game tables, trees, outdoor classroom space, play equipment for 5–12 year olds, and safety mats. The playground's green infrastructure, whose construction was funded by DEP, will manage more than 365,000 gallons of stormwater each year. Additionally, new trees will provide shade and improve the air quality of the surrounding neighborhoods.



## Spotlight on Safety

### EHS Insights



**Persis Luke**  
Assistant Commissioner  
Environmental Health  
and Safety

Once a month, you will see a few thoughts from me about DEP's successes and challenges in the realm of Environmental Compliance and Health and Safety (EHS). Overall DEP's EHS status is very sound and I know that DEP employees take workplace safety seriously. One area where we have seen a stubborn increase is motor vehicle events ("MVEs"). In 2017 DEP experienced 502 MVEs. This represents a 16% increase since 2015. Even more disturbing is a 180% increase in the number of preventable MVEs resulting in injuries (DEP employee or the public). We did have a slight increase in the number of drivers in

that period, but basically the same number of vehicles. This means that our driving practices and habits are playing a role in the increase.

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month. The National Safety Council (NSC) estimates that at least 25% of vehicle crashes are due to mobile device related distraction. This rate is on the rise. NSC uses their "Just Drive" campaign as part of their efforts to combat distracted driving. I like this campaign—we should all take note. So the next time you get into a DEP vehicle, or any vehicle for that matter...JUST DRIVE! And better yet, drive in a mindful and safe way. Your life, or that of your co-worker, or that of the public, may depend on it.

For more information on Distracted Driving Awareness Month, visit the [NSC 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.

## Commissioner's Corner



I am pleased to announce that construction has concluded on a [\\$71 million infrastructure upgrade project in Flushing, Queens](#), that will improve roadway drainage and help to mitigate flooding during heavy rainstorms. The upgrades include new storm and sanitary sewers, as well as water mains, fire hydrants and catch basins. Funding for the project was provided by DEP while DDC managed the construction, which began in 2012.

As part of the project, more than 7,700 linear feet of new storm sewers were constructed along the northbound Whitestone Expressway Service Road, between 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Flushing Creek, and in portions of 144<sup>th</sup> Street, Union Street, 25<sup>th</sup> Road, Farrington Street, and Higgins Street in the adjacent neighborhood. The newly added 53 catch basins will increase the system's stormwater storage capacity and help to alleviate flooding.

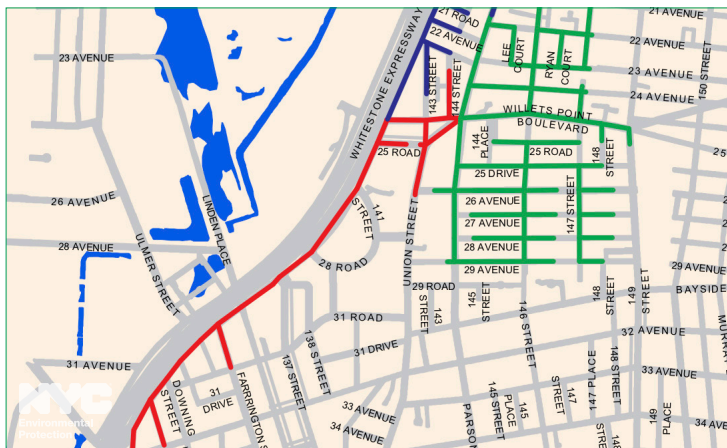
Additionally, while the roadway was open to install the sewers,

more than 8,000 linear feet of new ductile iron water mains were built to replace the older cast iron pipes. This will improve water distribution in the area and 22 new hydrants will ensure firefighters have a reliable supply of water. Also, approximately 1,800 linear feet of sanitary sewers were installed in the area.

At the completion of construction, the roadway was repaved and new curbs, sidewalks, pedestrian ramps, streetlights and traffic signals were installed. Also, 166 trees were planted to help beautify the neighborhood and improve air quality.

This project serves as the first phase of a three-phase plan to improve and upgrade the area's drainage and water distribution systems. The next two components are estimated to cost a combined \$120 million, with Phase II expected to start construction later this year and Phase III slated to commence in 2020.

This \$71 million investment in Flushing will significantly upgrade the sewer system, improve drainage, reduce flooding, and provide a reliable supply of water. I'd like to thank DDC Acting Commissioner Ana Barrio and her agency for their efforts in managing this project, and the next phases to come, as we work together to strengthen this neighborhood's infrastructure and make all of New York City more resilient.



## Learn How to Manage Diabetes



**Helene Abiola**  
WorkWell NYC

According to the [American Diabetes Association](#), 1.5 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes every year, 30.3 million Americans, or 9.4% of the population, has diabetes, and 84.1 million American adults has prediabetes.

The simplest way to explain diabetes is that too much sugar is circulating in your blood stream. Glucose (blood sugar) is a necessary fuel for your body that comes from food and is also produced naturally by both the liver and the kidneys. Healthy blood sugar levels stay that way when our bodies are able to properly regulate the hormone insulin from the pancreas. Unhealthy blood sugar levels can't properly regulate insulin. Insulin expedites the transfer of glucose from your blood and delivers it to muscle, liver and fat tissues where it can be used as fuel or stored for later use. When you lack sufficient insulin, glucose then accumulates in the blood stream and you have diabetes.

Many serious complications can result from uncontrolled diabetes

such as cardiovascular disease; damage to the nerves, kidneys, eyes and feet; skin conditions such as bacterial and fungal infections; hearing impairment and Alzheimer's disease. Even scarier still, diabetes remains the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States.

If you currently have a diagnosis of diabetes and you are one of the 95% of City employees who has EmblemHealth insurance, you can take advantage of the [Diabetes Care PATH](#) program. As a member of this case management program, you gain access to educational materials related to medicines and treatments to help you keep the disease under control.

If you work at Lefrak, WorkWell NYC will host a Brown Bag information and recruitment session on the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) on April 25 from 12:30–1pm or 1–1:30pm (bring your lunch). At this session, participants will take the CDC Risk Test for Prediabetes, find out if they are prediabetic, and whether they are eligible for the free 16-week program that is offered at zero cost at work. Email Employee Engagement & Wellness Programs at [EWP@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:EWP@dep.nyc.gov) to reserve your spot in a session.

## Anglers Encouraged to Fish for Trout



As New Yorkers mark the beginning of trout fishing season, [DEP encourages anglers to cast a line](#) at its reservoirs or at dozens of properties that include frontage along streams, rivers and lakes throughout the Catskill Mountains and Hudson River Valley. New York City's water supply features some of the best trout fishing in the Northeast. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation outlines statewide fishing regulations, including information on licenses, catch limits, and stocking, on its [website](#). Fishing on all city-owned reservoirs and lakes, along with some recreation units along streams and creeks, requires a free DEP Access Permit. An access permit can be obtained through DEP's online permitting system, found at [nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit](http://nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit).

## Panel Celebrates Women in Leadership



Kudos to the EEO Office and Diversity Committee for hosting the *Women in Leadership* panel at Lefrak on March 28 in celebration of Women's History Month, an annually recognized opportunity to honor the struggles and achievements of women. Panelists **Afrosa Amin**, Associate Chemist, BPS-DERTA; **Charmaine Berry**, Chief Inspector, BCS; **Sgt. Kelly Kilpatrick**, Environmental Police Officer, BPS; **Lindy Ann Marryshow**, Stationary Engineer Electric, BWT; **Shay McAtamney**, Chief of Environmental Compliance, BWSO; **Grace Pigott**, Assistant Deputy Director, OD&HR, and **Grace White**, Bureau Administrator, OD&HR were chosen for exemplifying exceptional leadership in their careers in City government and, in some cases, holding positions in non-traditional fields. The panelists provided helpful guidance on working in traditionally male-dominated fields, managing stress, maintaining work-life balance, and overcoming challenges. Everyone is encouraged to view [EEO's Diversity Events Page](#). For more information, please contact **Gloria Rodriguez**, Diversity Liaison, at [grodriguez@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:grodriguez@dep.nyc.gov) and **Darlene Martinez**, Diversity Director/Disability Service Facilitator/ Disability Rights Coordinator, at [dmartinez@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:dmartinez@dep.nyc.gov).

## Upcoming NYC Building Fair



BuildingsNY is the largest gathering of New York City-area building owners, property managers, engineers, and safety and infrastructure personnel. This year, DEP will be rolling out its new stormwater regulations which will have a significant impact on design and construction for the city. Join us May 8 and 9 at booth 267 at the Javits Convention Center, Manhattan.

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