

Commissioner's Corner



As Flint, Mich., struggles with their water quality crisis, it is important for New Yorkers to know that their water is of the highest quality and completely safe to drink. As you know, DEP invests billions of dollars annually to further

improve and update our water supply system. For example, repairs to the Delaware Aqueduct are ahead of schedule and just last year we activated the Croton Water Filtration Plant. In 2013, the Manhattan portion of City Water

Tunnel No. 3 was put into service and that same year all NYC water began flowing through the Ultraviolet Treatment Facility.

In addition, DEP spends substantial time and resources testing the quality of our water from 1,000 locations around the five boroughs, as well as monitoring the water quality upstate in our reservoirs, lakes and tunnels. In total, DEP conducts more than half a million water quality analyses every year.

While New York City's water is virtually lead free when it is delivered from our reservoir system, water can absorb lead from pipes, fixtures and solder (material used to join pipes) found in the internal plumbing of some buildings or homes. While all City-owned buildings, including all public schools, have been renovated to remove lead pipes, we believe that a moderate percentage of homes may have:

- Lead service lines, which connect the property to the City's water delivery infrastructure and are the responsibility of the property owner to maintain (generally properties built before 1961).
- Internal fixtures and plumbing that contain lead.
- Internal plumbing joined by lead solder (plumbing installed before 1987 may contain lead solder).

To help reduce the amount of lead that can dissolve from a homeowner's plumbing/service line into their tap water, DEP:

- Carefully and continuously monitors and adjusts the PH level of the water supply to

keep it within a specific range that reduces the corrosiveness of the water.

- Adds phosphoric acid, a substance which binds to pipes to create a protective film that reduces the release of metals, such as lead, from household plumbing.

Importantly, it seems that from everything we've learned to this point, Flint stopped taking similar protective measures when it switched its water source from the Detroit system to the Flint River. Any New York City property owners who are interested in testing their water for the presence of lead can contact DEP for a free kit by calling 311 or visiting the [311 website](#). Upon receiving the water sample, DEP will test the water and send the property owner the results within 30 days. Should the testing show an elevated level, the City will provide the property owner with recommended next steps.

I'd like to thank all of our nearly 6,000 employees who work so hard to ensure that our more than 9.5 million customers can rely on the safety of NYC water.



Spotlight on Safety

Recognizing Excellence in Health and Safety

Did you know that the new Always Creating Excellence (ACE) Awards includes a category for exceptional work in the field of health and safety? The ACE Awards provide us with a terrific opportunity to recognize individual employees and teams who embody DEP's core values and have made noteworthy contributions that have benefited the agency. Any submission for the category of health and safety should clearly show how the outcome of the project and/or activities had a significant impact on health and safety, and highlight any unusual challenges

the employee or employees had to overcome.

Examples of projects might include programs encouraging employees to report safety concerns, implementing proactive safety initiatives, reducing environmental impact, demonstrating citizenship and social responsibility by contributing to the community and promoting a stronger safety culture.

Submissions for the first quarterly ceremony are due by Friday, March 18. Please visit the [ACE Awards SharePoint site](#) for more information.

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.

In Memoriam



It is with extreme sadness that we announce the passing of our colleague and friend **Victor Feigelman**, P.E., former Deputy Chief Engineer of the Board of Water Supply. He was born in the Bronx in 1926 and at the age of 18 he enlisted in the U.S. Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of Western Europe.

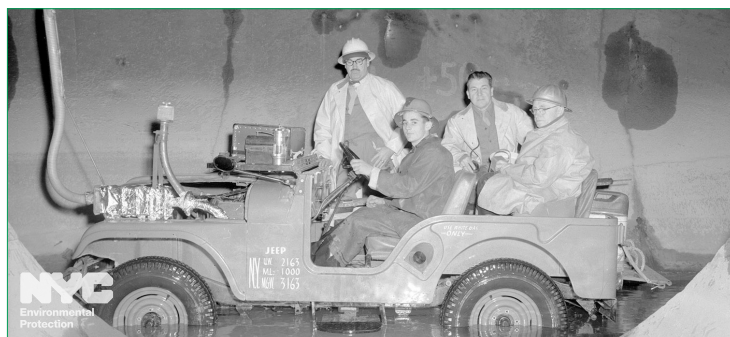
Victor obtained his Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree from City College of New York in 1949 and his master's degree from Brooklyn Polytechnic University. Notably, he was also a four-time champion on the TV show Jeopardy.

Victor worked for the Board of Water Supply from 1953 to 1986 and contributed to numerous projects involving the upstate reservoirs, Delaware Aqueduct, Hillview Reservoir and City Water Tunnel No. 3. In 1957, Victor and his colleagues utilized a jeep to inspect the Delaware Aqueduct and their photo appeared in the Guinness Book of World Records. After the inspection, Victor wrote extensive reports on the

condition of the Aqueduct and, even in his retirement, contributed to DEP's mission to provide a reliable supply of water to New York City.

In 2013, Victor was the last engineer alive who had inspected the Delaware Aqueduct. In order to gain valuable insight concerning his inspection of the tunnel in 1957, **Burjor Kharivala**, Chief Tunnel Engineer for DEP, contacted Victor on several occasions. Mr. Kharivala even picked him up at his apartment in Manhattan and brought him to DEP's Lefrak headquarters for a meeting with the engineering team to discuss problems encountered during the 1957 inspection. As usual, Victor provided valuable information that was then used in the preparation of the contract for the Rondout West Branch Bypass Tunnel project.

Victor Feigelman passed away on December 17, 2015 and leaves behind four children; Ted, Elizabeth, Susan, and Paul, and six grandchildren who all miss him very much.



RSVP for 'Speed Networking'



Please join us on February 18th, from 12:10 to 1:00pm, for an Emerging Leaders Network Mixer—a DEP inter-bureau speed networking event. Held at the Rego Community Center, you'll get a name tag and a list of starter questions about people's projects and experiences at DEP. We'll keep an eye on the time and call 'switch' every few minutes, so you'll have a chance to meet a diverse group of your fellow employees. Cost is \$5 for snacks and drinks. Find more information and RSVP [here](#).

Kids these days...

*A note from **Kaitlyn Maceira**, LMHC, CASAC, with the Employee Assistance Program*

New York State is currently in its second year of a five year prevention-based grant to combat the opioid epidemic that is devastating our adolescent and young adult population. Last month, we wrote about how the use of opiates has run rampant amongst adolescents and young adults due to its easy accessibility—the family medicine cabinet. An addiction to prescription medication can quickly escalate to heroin use due to, as explained by CNN, “a crackdown on prescription pain killers has had the unintended effect of pushing more teens to cheaper and more accessible heroin.” The at-risk communities for heroin addiction are not those from years past. Rather than urban centers, it is the upper-middle class neighborhoods throughout the state, such as Long Island, that have been in the news with some of the highest, and fastest growing, numbers of heroin addicted teenagers. “Long Island is losing three young adults every two

days to drugs and alcohol,” stated Claudia Ragni, the owner of Kenneth Peters Center for Recovery, an outpatient substance abuse treatment facility on Long Island.

The best way to stem the tide is to seek help and gain support. However, navigating the in-patient substance abuse world in addition to trying to make sense of the managed care world, all while dealing with the emotional stress that comes with watching a loved one suffer from an addiction can be difficult, draining, disheartening and discouraging. But assistance is available. The NYC EAP provides the same services to family members of employees as it does to the employees themselves. Staff will find a treatment facility, work with your insurance company and monitor progress so that your focus is where it should be—on the well-being of yourself and your family. All information and services provided by the NYC EAP are free and confidential and can be accessed by calling (212) 306-7660 or emailing eap@olr.nyc.gov.

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