

Harbor Health Continues to Improve

DEP joined with Mayor de Blasio last week to announce that with the continued expansion of the nation's most ambitious and aggressive green infrastructure program, and ongoing upgrades to the City's wastewater system, testing confirms that [New York Harbor is cleaner and healthier today than it has been in more than a century.](#)

Key indicators of water quality, including concentrations of bacteria and nitrogen continue to drop, while dissolved oxygen is on the rise. By the end of the year there will be nearly 4,000 curbside rain gardens constructed across the city and DEP is also investing billions of dollars to upgrade the wastewater collection system. The agency is also moving forward with plans to construct overflow retention tanks for the Gowanus Canal, as well as proposing storage tunnels for Newtown Creek and Flushing Bay. The New York City Harbor Water Quality Report can be found [here](#).



Spotlight on Safety

Working Safely in Cold Weather

Next week marks the start of winter, and our area has already gotten its first glimpse of snowfall this season. Freezing temperatures can pose serious health hazards for outdoor workers if they are not properly prepared, such as hypothermia and frostbite. Hypothermia can begin if a person's body temperature drops to or below 95 degrees Fahrenheit; symptoms can include shivering, slurred speech, numb hands, and confusion. Frostbite is damage to the skin and underlying tissue, and symptoms include numbness, painful loss of feeling, and white or blue appearance of the skin. Both are serious and can lead to death.

Remember, cold stress hazards can be prevented by taking proper precautions including the following:

- be aware of weather forecasts, **especially the wind chill factor**
- work in pairs and monitor other workers' conditions; know the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illness
- wear proper clothing for wet and windy conditions, including hats and gloves
- layer clothing to adjust to the temperature

If you suspect someone is suffering from any of these conditions, alert a supervisor, call 911, and move the victim into a warm area.

Follow the safety guidelines in DEP's "[Exposure to Extreme Heat and Cold](#)" Guidance and OSHA's [Cold Stress page](#).

Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



Cecil McMaster, DEP's Deputy Commissioner/Chief Information Officer for the Office of Information Technology, is a guest commentator this week.

In our golden age of e-commerce, social media, and ubiquitous mobile devices, we've inadvertently made the holidays particularly merry for cyber criminals. They've figured out that the busier people get, the more careless they become with their belongings, both tangible and virtual. Such was the case with Spring Hill, Tenn., when it was the victim of a cyberattack last month caused by an email attachment opened by an unwitting city employee. The ransomware locked up government computer servers with a demand of \$250,000 to unlock them and affected all departments, including the utility billing department, which was unable to view water/sewer account histories and had to process new records with pen and paper. Here are some friendly reminders to help you protect yourself and our agency from potential Scrooges.

- **Don't Take the Phishing Bait**
Watch for emails offering fabulous deals, such as Black Friday/Cyber Monday

one-day promotions on the hottest items of the season. Discard them without clicking on any links and shop instead at a trusted retailer's official website.

- **Don't Let Your New Device Give Away the Company Data**
Resist the temptation to use your new electronic gifts for work. Personal devices generally don't come close to having adequate security controls. And don't forward your work emails to your personal email account or vice versa—that could expose your corporate data to a multitude of risks.
- **Don't Fall for the Threatening Call**
Phone calls claiming you're in financial trouble (e.g. you are about to be sued by the IRS or have defaulted on student loans) are on the rise. Never respond to these callers—and don't even think about wiring anyone money. Contact the appropriate representatives yourself if you are in doubt.
- **Don't Be Too Sociable**
Beware of using social media to tout your holiday trip out of town or your front-row tickets to the Nutcracker. Advertising your plans to be away ahead of time paints a target around you and your empty house. Best to wait until you get back home.

These are just a few tips to help keep you and your information safe from scammers. For more tips or to report suspicious activities, please contact IT Service Desk at 718-595-4160 or email ITServiceDesk@dep.nyc.gov.



Photo Credit: William Iven

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.

Batteries Replaced at Cat-Del UV



The Catskill-Delaware Ultraviolet Light Disinfection Facility recently replaced 960 mini-fridge-sized batteries that make up a 480-volt system used to power the ultraviolet lights in case the generators do not kick on right away should the electricity turn off. The plant can treat more than 2 billion gallons of water each day, using light from 11,700 ultraviolet bulbs to neutralize certain pathogens that can cause gastrointestinal ailments. The batteries, each one weighing 550 pounds, fill two large rooms at the plant and sit on steel racks. Electricians and stationary engineers in the Water Treatment Operations Directorate used a custom-built gantry equipped with a 1,000-pound crane and special sling to hoist out the old batteries and install the new ones.

Volunteers Needed for Homeless Count



Photo Credit: Department of Homeless Services

The NYC Department of Homeless Services will be conducting its annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE) on Monday, Jan. 22, 2018. HOPE is a citywide annual effort to count every New Yorker sleeping on the street across all five boroughs. Volunteers will be needed from 12 a.m. to 4 a.m. to canvass parks, subways, and other public spaces to estimate the number of people living on the streets. If you would like to register as a volunteer and help homelessness in NYC, please [click here](#).

International Scientists Visit Ashokan



More than 200 scientists from around the globe gathered in Ulster County last month for the 19th meeting of the Global Lake Ecological Observatory Network (GLEON). The group, of which DEP is a member, seeks to understand, predict and communicate the role and response of lakes in a changing global environment by collaborating on scientific research and sharing information from lakes and reservoirs across the world. Dozens of the scientists also joined staff from the Bureau of Water Supply for a tour of Ashokan Reservoir and an up-close look at some of the robotic monitoring equipment that is used to track water quality throughout the New York City water supply. The scientists took particular interest in a buoy, designed by BWS scientists, that can gather and transmit data while the reservoirs are covered with ice.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 17 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from **Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**, Deputy Director for Human Resources Management **Herb Roth**, HR Specialist **Grace Franco** and Recruitment Coordinator **Briana Lomax-Day**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Deandra N. Harrison, **Lamont Jackson**, **Rashiem R. James** (not pictured), **Rayetta R. Johnson**, **Emily Y. Lin**, **Lima M. Primus** and **Francesca M. Young** with BCS; **Lina A. Shehab** with BEC; **Luke J. Rogan** with BEDC; **William Long** and **Jamie L. Overton** with BWS; **Mohammad R. Karim**, **Jessica F. Uruchima**, **Angelo Zuardo** and **Jacques S. Johnson Sr.** with BWSO; **Jennifer S. McDonnell** with BWT; and **Gregory M. Nesturrick** with CFO/FMC.

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