

Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



Diana Jones Ritter, DEP's Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Organizational Development and Human Resources, is a guest commentator this week.

DEP provides vital services to nearly 10 million New Yorkers every day, and to ensure that we can continue fulfilling our important mission for the decades ahead, we must continually think about replenishing our talented workforce. One of many ways we encourage young New Yorkers to learn about what we do and get excited about protecting public health and the environment is through our annual summer internship program.

This summer, we will offer more than 100 internship positions, both in the city and in the upstate watersheds, where college students can work alongside our engineers, planners, lawyers, scientists, and other professionals. The vast majority of these positions are paid. Many of our past summer interns have gone on to have great careers at

DEP, and at other organizations in our industry. In fact, BEDC Deputy Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** got his start in DEP's summer internship program.

The intern positions available include summer work associated with New York City's drinking water distribution system, wastewater treatment facilities, construction and repair projects, community outreach, legal affairs, air quality permitting, sustainability projects, environmental, health and safety compliance, graphic design, community outreach, and digitizing nearly two centuries worth of water system archives. The vast majority of the internships are located at DEP headquarters in Queens. Some are located upstate at DEP's offices in Delaware, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties. Three of the positions will be located at the DEP Archives in Manhattan. For more information please contact **Grace Pigott** at gracep@dep.nyc.gov.

Prospective interns are encouraged to carefully read the qualifications for each job to determine whether they meet the enrollment, GPA, coursework and other requirements. Candidates must submit applications by April 1. Information about these internships, including online applications, can be found on the DEP website by clicking [here](#).

In addition, DEP will continue to participate in this summer's NYC Summer Youth Employment (SYEP) and Ladders for Leaders



Programs. These initiatives provide young adults with work experience and career exposure. Last year we offered positions to 32 candidates. For more information about these programs, please contact **Briana Lomax-Day** at brianal@dep.nyc.gov.

A strong internship program is a summer tradition at DEP. Our efforts to recruit and retain the best and the brightest is among

the many reasons we continue to be one of the top water utilities in the nation. Participation in these programs is a great opportunity to inspire future talent to consider a career in city government. I hope you all will share this information with your family, friends, and colleagues to help ensure that we get another great class of summer interns. Photos of our past summer programs are available [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

Exxon Mobil Refinery Explosion

In February 2015, an explosion occurred at the ExxonMobil Refinery in Torrance, California and two workers were injured. However, the U.S. Chemical Safety Board reported that it could have been much worse, due to a near miss. As a result of the explosion, a large piece of debris was thrown and narrowly missed landing on a tank containing tens of thousands of pounds of a highly toxic chemical. If that chemical had been released into the neighboring community, it could have potentially caused

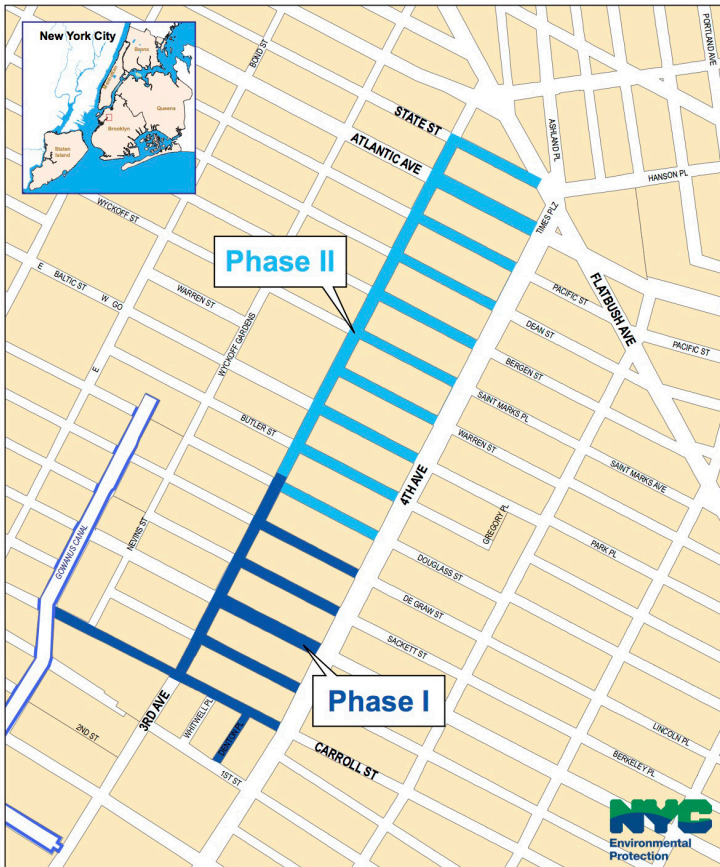
thousands of injuries and even death.

Unpredictable occurrences are why reporting near misses is so important. It allows for a proper investigation and the recommendation and implementation of appropriate actions to prevent serious incidents from actually occurring. Report near misses as you would actual incidents by reviewing the [DEP Policy: Injury & Illness Investigation and Recordkeeping](#) and completing the [DEP Incident Investigation Reporting \(IIR\) form](#).



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.

Storm Sewers for Gowanus



This spring, we will join with the Department of Design and Construction to begin the installation of nearly three miles of high level storm sewers in the Gowanus neighborhood. By creating additional capacity in the neighborhood's drainage system, the \$52 million project will help to reduce street flooding and the amount of pollution that may be discharged into the Gowanus Canal during heavy rain storms. While the roadway is open to build the sewers, nearly two miles of new water mains will also be installed.

Over the last 12 months, electric and gas utilities have been relocated to make room beneath the roadways for the new sewers. As part of the construction beginning this spring, 87 new catch basins will be installed to allow stormwater to drain from the streets into 14,000 linear feet of new high level storm sewers. In addition, all existing catch basin drainage connections will be switched from the existing combined sewer to the new high level storm sewers. This will ensure that more wastewater gets routed to a wastewater treatment plant and reduce the likelihood and volume of any combined sewer overflows into the Canal. To read more, click [here](#).

DEP Mentoring Program Survey

DEP is in the process of planning, developing and implementing a formal voluntary mentoring program. To help OD&HR design a mentoring program that will ensure employees have the social networks established to build their careers and support their professional growth, please complete this [online survey](#).

Pepacton Cemetery Rehabilitation



Plans are underway to clean and repair more than 300 headstones this spring at Pepacton Cemetery in Delaware County. This project was conceived out of respect for the deceased who were reinterred by New York City when it constructed Pepacton and Cannonsville reservoirs in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time, families were notified and given the opportunity to reinter deceased relatives in a location of their choosing. The remains of those whose families did not come forward were reinterred in Pepacton Cemetery. The repair work will be performed by a company from Delhi, N.Y. that specializes in gravestone rehabilitation. DEP is inviting descendants of those buried in the cemetery to reach out if they have any questions or concerns about the restoration project. Inquiries can be directed to DEP's Downsville Regional Manager, **Chris Gozza**, at (607) 363-7003. Click [here](#) to read more about this project

Port Richmond Water Challenge



As DEP works with the public to reduce the demand for water citywide, we are also looking at how we consume water within our own operations. Recently, the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis teamed up with staff at the Port Richmond Wastewater Treatment Plant to explore every option available to curtail the plant's water usage. Through this collaboration, the plant has taken steps to alter some of its operational procedures, such as reducing the amount of fresh water needed to cool the digester gas compressor heat exchanger and restricting the use of hoses. The plant has also introduced safer hose nozzles with control valves that reduce water flow while cleaning tanks. In addition, the plant's staff has surveyed service lines to pinpoint and repair leaks. Many thanks to all of the staff who dedicated their time and energy to implement changes that will preserve our water resources and help DEP to lead by example.

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