

Tough Break



Last Friday, DEP emergency crews responded to a broken water main under 5th Avenue at 12th Street in Manhattan. The 30-inch main was originally installed in 1908. Crews continue to work to carefully repair the main. Because of their methodical approach to the repair, not one customer has experienced a disruption to their water service.

Spotlight on Safety

When do you need to wear a dust mask?

It depends. DEP employees may be required to use a dust mask to conduct a particular task because the concentration of dust in that work area exceeds OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL). Also, employees may elect to voluntarily use a dust mask when one isn't required. In either case, its use is regulated by OSHA's Respiratory Protection Standard, but compliance varies depending if it is mandatory or if the voluntary use is permitted by the employer. If mandated by the employer all sections of the

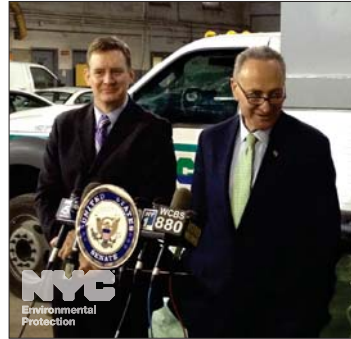
standard apply, but if voluntarily used, dust masks have to only comply with specific sections of the standard, including providing employees with the voluntary use information in Attachment D of the DEP Policy.

For more information on how DEP complies with OSHA's standard please see: [DEP Respiratory Protection Policy](#). For voluntary use information please see Attachment D of the policy located at: [DEP Respiratory Protection Attachment D Voluntary Usage Policy](#).

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



Yesterday, I joined New York's senior U.S. Senator **Chuck Schumer** at a press conference where we called on the EPA to reform a recent interpretation of their proposed lead and copper rules that would require us to replace or retrofit the 1,400 brand new fire hydrants we have in stock. The surprise interpretation of the proposed rule aims to address a theoretical risk that could only materialize if someone was to drink from a hydrant for an extended period of time.

In addition to providing the highest level of service for our customers, and satisfying all of our regulatory requirements, we have a responsibility to keep water affordable for New Yorkers. That is why we proactively work with our regulators and our elected leaders to enact smart rules—based on sound science—to ensure that the 9 million people we serve continue to receive the highest quality drinking water and clean waterways at an affordable price.

DEP has been successful in our efforts to work with regulators to enact smart regulations and reduce mandates when the data show that the benefits do

not justify the cost to our rate-payers. For example, last year we successfully eliminated or deferred a \$3.4 billion dollar mandate for handling combined sewer overflows by prioritizing the installation of green infrastructure in an amended consent order with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. We also deferred \$1.6 billion for construction of a Hillview Reservoir cover, and we are currently evaluating the alternative of incremental monitoring. If necessary, we will work with Senator Schumer to pass legislation exempting fire hydrants from EPA's proposed lead and copper rules.

These are just a few examples that demonstrate that working together with our regulators and elected leaders at the state and federal levels, we can deliver safe and high quality drinking water, improve the health of our environment, and keep costs low for our customers at the same time. Our regulatory reform efforts are part of the reason that the cost of water in New York City is less than the national average.

I would like to give a special thanks to **Paul Vilella** and his team at the Pike Street Yard for hosting Senator Schumer on short notice. I would also like to recognize Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations District Supervisor **Howard Baierlein**, who is retiring at the end of the year after nearly 30 years of service. He will be missed. You can read more about Howard's career in this week's edition of Focus on the Field.

DEP Holiday Toy Drive

Please take part in DEP's Holiday Toy Drive by donating new and unwrapped toys, sports equipment or accessories for young people from tots to teens. Please drop off toys with your [bureau coordinators](#). Final day to donate is Wednesday, December 18th.

Focus on the Field



Whether it's responding to a water main break in the middle of Manhattan's business district or ensuring that fire hydrants are not illegally opened during the summer months, the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operation's (BWSO) District Supervisor **Howard Baierlein** is usually in the middle of the action. Baierlein grew up on Long Island and joined DEP in June of 1984 as a laborer. He worked his way up the ladder over the years and is now the Day Supervisor at Manhattan's Pike Street yard, where he oversees roughly 30 employees.

In October, Baierlein spearheaded the repair of a critical hydrant along the Harlem River Drive that was damaged by a private contractor. The repair was essential and needed to be completed immediately because the hydrant plays a vital role in operations associated with the Croton Aqueduct. With limited space for maneuvering trucks and equipment, Howard developed a plan to quickly repair the hydrant while keeping his team safe.

"Every day on this job presents a unique challenge," said Baierlein. "Thanks to a great team, including Supervisor **Robert Estevez**, we've managed to keep everything running smoothly in the borough."

Last Friday, Baierlein and his unit responded to a water main break at 5th Avenue and 12th Street. As with most repairs in Manhattan, the presence of multiple utilities under the roadway and the high volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the area required careful coordination with a focus on safety. The investigation found that a nearly century old 36 inch water main had cracked and would need to be repaired. However, thanks to the recent activation of City Water Tunnel No. 3, there was adequate pressure in the other mains serving the area and no residents or businesses were ever without water.

After nearly 30 years with DEP, Baierlein will retire at year's end. An avid outdoorsman, he looks forward to spending some time fishing in the watershed, bicycling, relaxing at home with his wife, and visiting his two children.

"Howard often works side by side with his crews instructing them on proper techniques and ensuring that health and safety protocols are followed," said BWSO's Manhattan Borough Manager **Paul Villella**. "The unit is highly efficient and productive and we will certainly miss Howard's leadership upon his retirement. We wish him well, he has earned it."

Winter Blood Drive Continues



Kensico/Highland/Sutton Park 12/12, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.

One of every three people will need a life-saving blood transfusion at some point during their lifetime and a continuous and steady supply is necessary because blood is perishable. Please help by donating at the below locations and times:

Downsville Region: Downsville Fire Hall, 12/11, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm; **Grahamsville Region:** DEP Grahamsville parking lot, 12/11 and 12/12, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm;

Region: Sutton Park—2nd Floor,

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 16 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Operating Officer **Kathryn Garcia** and Deputy Director of Human Resources Management **Herb Roth**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Padmini Naidu, Randy Persaud, Cheneir N. Rivers, and Jouleya Rollerson with BEDC; **Willie Martin Jr., Gregory P. Melville, Frank J. Pastore, and Timothy C. Vesely** with BWSO; **Virginia De La Rosa, Brian Maida, and Gina G. Marquez** (not pictured) with BWT; **Mozelle Toler and Claese Williams** with BCS; **Michael Feder** with Sustainability; **Donald J. Lord** with BEPA; and **Leonor M. Melendres** with BEC.

WHY GO TO THE MALL WHEN WE HAVE A DEPARTMENT STORE RIGHT HERE?

Upcoming shopping events:

- **Tallman Island**
Wednesday, December 11
1:30 – 3:00pm
Cafeteria, main bldg
- **Kingston**
Friday, December 13
12:00 – 2:00pm
Training rooms 1 and 2
- **LeFrak**
Tuesday, December 17
12:00 – 2:00pm
18th floor conference room



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