

Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



Michael DeLoach
Deputy Commissioner
Public Affairs & Communications

[DEP sponsored more than 300 public school students](#) who participated in DEC's "A Day in the Life of the Hudson & Harbor" educational event last week, located along the East River at Gantry Plaza State Park.

Advanced placement environmental science students from the High School for Environmental Studies in Manhattan and 6th-8th graders from Hunter's Point Community Middle School in Queens participated in the event during which teams collected and analyzed water samples and made environmental observations. Students used field techniques

to track the river's tides and currents, examined the water's chemistry, identified macroinvertebrates and fish, and observed oyster colonies. Five stations were also set up where students were able to measure the river's currents and perform tests to determine the level of turbidity, pH, salinity and dissolved oxygen in the water. Through this program, data is collected by the nearly 5,000 students at 72 different locations, from Troy to New York City. Special thanks to BPAC's **Robin Sanchez** who was instrumental in organizing this event, and **LaToya Anderson, Lilli Genovesi, Helene Amato, and Kim Estes-Fradis**.

New York Harbor is a critical part of the Hudson River estuary and over the last decade DEP



has invested more than \$10 billion to improve water quality and restore wetlands and adjacent grasslands, helping to bring back native fish populations and allow for greater recreational use. We're proud to partner with DEC to bring this valuable program to thousands of young New Yorkers and to inspire stewards who will ensure that future generations can enjoy all the Hudson River has to offer.

This is just one of the ways DEP connects with young New Yorkers to instill an appreciation for the environment and inspire environmental stewardship on a local level. BPAC's Education team also services more than 30,000 students and more than 1,000 teachers each year while facilitating field trips to the Visitor Center

at Newtown Creek, presenting lessons at schools, partnering with the Trout in the Classroom program, developing curricula, coordinating the annual Art & Poetry contest for school children in NYC and the watershed, and providing an important support network for educators.



Spotlight on Safety

**'Spill' or 'Release,'
Do You Know the
Difference?**

In the field of environmental health and safety (EHS), the terms "spill" and "release" are often used interchangeably by individuals, and even regulatory agencies. While these terms can mean the same thing, they can also mean the difference between simply cleaning up a puddle, or facing a possible fine and lengthy remediation. A simple way to differentiate the two terms is that a spill occurs when a puddle forms as a result of a substance leaking from its container, pipe or hose; if the spill enters the environment it is a release.

DEP's EHS Reporting and Investigation policy defines spills and releases in more detail as follows:

- **Release:** Any emptying of a hazardous substance that enters the environment.
- **Incidental Spill:** A release of no more than a few ounces of a hazardous substance from its ordinary container that does not enter into the environment.

Facility plans should be in place to control spills, this can prevent them from turning into serious releases. For more information on the handling and reporting of spills and releases, visit [DEP's EHS Reporting and Investigation 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. HELP IS ON THE WAY.



Kudos Corner



The Bureau of Customer Service's Staten Island Borough Office and Queens Collections Unit have been recognized by the Mayor's Office for achieving perfect scores during the 2018 Customer Observing and Reporting Experiences (CORE) facility inspections. The offices were highlighted for providing excellent customer service in a well-maintained facility. Both offices were congratulated by BCS Deputy Commissioner **Nancy Cianflone** at special luncheons held during Customer Service Week, Oct. 1–5. BCS handles the agency's water and sewer billing, payment options, and account information for services including service inspections and repairs.



New Hires



Today, 11 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott**, HR Specialist **Grace Franco**, and HR Generalist **Conor Bulger**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Margaret-Anne Johnson with ACCO; **Matthew Pacicco** and **Xiangjie Zhao** with BEDC; **Sarah Y. Ivanovic** with BEPA; **Phillip V. DiPinto** with BWS; **Sursati Harilall**, **MD Tweyafur Rahman**, **Carmen I. Ruiz**, **Marco M. Salib** and **Jessica L. Soto** with BWSO; and **Rafael Martinovick** with BWT.

Newtown Creek Hosts BEPA



Team-building and collaboration were the main themes of the BEPA + Superfund group outing on Oct. 5 to Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. The objective of the day, led by Deputy Commissioner **Angela Licata**, was to bring together the different units to develop stronger partnerships within the bureau that could potentially lead to collaboration on current and future projects. There were plenty of takeaways from the day and staff had an opportunity to engage with colleagues in fun and constructive ways. The highly productive team-building concluded with an informative tour of the plant led by facility manager **Frank Loncar**.

Chelsea Playground Goes Green



Commissioner Sapienza, City Council Speaker **Corey Johnson** and The Trust for Public Land cut the ribbon Oct. 10 on a new, student-designed, [green playground at PS 33-Chelsea Prep in Manhattan](#). The \$1.16M upgraded play space is located within a 10-minute walk from home for more than 30,000 residents, which includes a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) development. The completed playground includes 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 will capture 365,000 gallons of stormwater, improving the health of the East River.

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