

Steam Main Explosion Update



Following the July 19th steam main explosion that occurred in Manhattan at West 21st Street and 5th Avenue, 40 of the 45 buildings initially impacted have been fully cleared for re-occupancy, one building is still being assessed, and an additional four buildings have been partially cleared to reopen. The City continues to work aggressively to clean the remaining buildings so they can be reoccupied.

DEP has collected more than 2,300 outdoor air samples in the affected area to test for the presence of asbestos and the results show that the air is safe for the public. DEP will continue collecting air samples throughout the cleanup process and sampling results can be found [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

OSHA's New Occupational Chemical Database

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has a new Occupational Chemical Database which compiles information from several government agencies and organizations them into one online resource. The webpage includes chemical identification and physical properties, permissible exposure limits (PELs), and sampling information.

Chemicals can be found in any workplace, not just in a laboratory setting. The Safety Data Sheets (SDS) binder should be placed in an easily accessible place for employees and contain the information for all products used at the worksite. Those who work in a lab setting interact with many different chemicals. Proper labeling

of chemicals should contain the identity of the chemical, appropriate hazard warnings with primary health or physical hazards and the name and address of the manufacturer written in English. With the OSHA database, chemicals can be searched by name or identification number, or grouped by PEL, carcinogenic level, or whether they pose an immediate threat when inhaled.

Employers are expected to comply with a number of standards to prevent employees from being potentially exposed to chemical hazards. These include OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limits PELs for about 400 substances.

For more information visit the [OSHA Occupational Chemical Database](#).

Commissioner's Corner

DEP recently announced plans for a \$1.2 billion tunneling project that will improve operational reliability of the drinking water supply for more than 9 million people in the City and Westchester County. The public works project will be New York City's largest water-supply tunneling effort in Westchester County since the 1940s, and its construction will create hundreds of jobs for local laborers. Construction on the first elements of the project is expected to start in approximately five years.

The centerpiece of the project—known as the Kensico-Eastview Connection (KEC)—will be a 2-mile-long tunnel between Kensico Reservoir and the Catskill-Delaware Ultraviolet Light Disinfection Facility in Eastview. This new aqueduct will supplement conveyance between these essential components of the water supply, providing DEP with the redundancy to perform comprehensive, long-term upkeep of the system. Construction on the first portions of the KEC project are expected to start in approximately five years; work on the tunnel itself is expected to begin around 2025. DEP expects to finish the project around 2035.

DEP expects the finished tunnel to measure approximately 27 feet in diameter and run 400-500 feet below ground. The tunnel will be large enough to carry a maximum of 2.6 billion gallons of water each day. Its design accounts for future growth in the City and Westchester County, the potential addition of treatment facilities, and the need to periodically take other aqueducts out of service for maintenance or inspection.

The project also includes new facilities and site work at Kensico Reservoir and the ultraviolet treatment plant. A century-old intake chamber at Kensico Reservoir will be upgraded and enlarged to draw water into the new tunnel. The reservoir's shoreline around that intake chamber will also be improved to prevent sediment from entering the new tunnel. A new screen chamber to remove debris from the water will be constructed just north of DEP's main campus at the reservoir, near Columbus Avenue in Valhalla. An interconnection for the Town of Mount Pleasant water supply will also be incorporated into the screen chamber. The chemical feed systems at Kensico Reservoir will be upgraded to provide the proper treatment of drinking water in the new tunnel and existing ones. The work at Kensico Reservoir will also include a range of grading, drainage, stormwater and utility improvements.

In addition to the work at Kensico Reservoir, DEP will also build a connection chamber at the ultraviolet plant to receive water from the new tunnel. The chamber will connect to a number of existing pipes at the ultraviolet facility that were installed at the time of its construction. Work at this site will also include a number of projects related to drainage, stormwater and utility improvements.

We look forward to working with our neighbors in Westchester County to ensure that the City's waterworks continue to supply high-quality drinking water to more than 9.6 million New Yorkers every day.



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.

Focus on the Field



As we prepare for the shutdown of the Delaware Aqueduct in 2022, DEP has embarked on a mission to ensure an uninterrupted supply of drinking water by implementing water savings programs on both public and private properties through the Water Demand Management Plan (WDMP).

BEPA Project Manager **Nigel Williams** plays an integral role in achieving objectives set forth in the WDMP by overseeing the Toilet Replacement Program, a voucher-based program that provides a discount to customers on the cost of new toilet fixtures. The goal of this program is to incentivize owners of residential and multi-family buildings on the Multi-Family Conservation Program water billing rate to replace inefficient toilets, which can use anywhere from 3.5 to 5 gallons of water per flush, with high-efficiency certified models, which consume 1.28 gallons of water per flush or less.

Williams began his career in civil service with the Administration for Children's Services, before leaving to pursue a career in the private sector for more than a decade. A calling for civil service lead him back to the City and he joined DEP's Bureau of Customer Service, working first in the call center where he says he was able to gain a great deal of knowledge about the agency.

"I had some great mentors in BCS, including John Wilson and the late Stephen Barry," he said. "I learned that if we can just

change the experience of one customer at a time, we're making a difference."

Williams and his team have assisted more than 1,300 homeowners in obtaining free, high efficiency toilets which has saved these homeowners \$1.57 million in new toilet costs, while helping to reduce water usage. To date, more than 12,600 toilets have been replaced citywide, achieving an estimated savings of 510,000 gallons of water per day.

The program has been extended to NYCHA properties, which will see 70 percent of toilets upgraded at more than 85 properties. The program has also been extended to 4,300 3- and 4-family property owners citywide, many of whom are low-income and seniors, who are enrolled in the Home Water Assistance Program.

A father of 10, Williams is a native New Yorker and currently resides in the East Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn. Three of his children are presently attending college and two have recently graduated. He says he tries to inspire his children to love the environment, and New York City, just as much as he does.

"Our first priority is to help people," he said. "I could be off duty in the supermarket with my kids, but as a civil servant if someone comes up to me and asks for help with their water bill, I feel it's my duty to help them. I make sure they always get a call back."

H.E.A.T. Campaign Launches



DEP has launched the [2018 Hydrant Education Action Team \(HEAT\) program](#), a fire hydrant abuse prevention campaign that deploys teams of teens hired through the Department of Youth and Community Development's Summer Youth Employment Program to inform New Yorkers about the dangers of illegally opening fire hydrants. Illegally opened fire hydrants release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute and can reduce water pressure in neighborhoods making it difficult to fight fires. After ten years of successful HEAT outreach campaigns, reports of illegally opened hydrants have fallen by more than 50 percent during June and July. Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap, which releases only 20 to 25 gallons per minute, ensuring adequate water pressure and reducing the risk that a child could be knocked over and injured by the force of the water. Spray caps can be requested by an adult 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses.

New Green Playground for Park Slope



Commissioner Sapienza and New York City Council Member Brad Lander recently announced that construction has begun on a [new "green" playground at P.S. 282](#) in Park Slope, Brooklyn. The former asphalt lot will be transformed with the addition of green infrastructure and trees that has the storage capacity to capture nearly 1 million gallons of stormwater annually and help to improve the health of the Gowanus Canal. Set to be completed by the end of the year, the playground improvements will include a synthetic turf field, a running track, a spray fountain and drinking water fountain, a basketball hoop, and benches and trees. Council Member Lander provided \$250,000 in funding and DEP allocated \$350,000.

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