

Demonstrably Greener



Last week, DEP's Bureau of Sustainability announced the completion of the first of three Green Infrastructure Neighborhood Demonstration Areas. The 23 acre drainage area in East New York is served by combined sewers that convey sanitary and stormwater flow to the 26th Ward Wastewater Treatment Plant. As part of a plan to improve the ecological health and cleanliness of New York City harbor water, DEP constructed 29 bioswales and two stormwater greenstreets. The Green Infrastructure installations are expected to clean the air, beautify the neighborhood, and prevent near-

ly four million gallons of stormwater from reaching the combined sewer system each year.

Bioswales differ from standard street tree pits in that they are significantly larger, have curb cuts that allow stormwater to enter and exit, and are designed to manage nearly 2,250 gallons each during a storm. Stormwater greenstreets are similar to bioswales in that they feature inlets, broken stone, engineered soil, and hardy plants to collect and absorb stormwater from the street and sidewalk. They are slightly larger than bioswales and are built in underutilized roadbed areas along the curb.

Two additional Demonstration Areas, in the Newtown Creek tributary area in Brooklyn and the Hutchinson River tributary in the Bronx, are in the works for later this year. These pilot ventures were developed in order to collect and analyze data about the benefits of green infrastructure installations on a multi-block scale. The data will then be used to maximize the effectiveness of future green infrastructure projects.

Spotlight on Safety

Watch Your Back!

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 70 workers died from preventable "back-over" incidents in 2011. This occurs when a vehicle moving in reverse strikes a worker who is standing, walking, or kneeling behind it.

Here are some tips to help prevent back-over incidents:

- Drivers can use a spotter to help them safely back up their vehicle.
- Workers should wear high visibility clothing.

- Workers should be aware of a vehicle's blind spot and stay out of it.
- In complex construction environments, employers may create internal traffic control plans which tell vehicle operators where to drive, reduce the need for backing up, and separate employees on foot from operating equipment.

For more information visit osha.gov/backover

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



As we continue to make steady progress towards a ground breaking later this year to repair the Rondout-West Branch portion of the Delaware Aqueduct, we are concurrently moving ahead with a range of initiatives to reduce demand for water. To date, we have announced partnerships with the Departments of Parks and Recreation, and Education that will cumulatively save more than 900 million gallons of water each year by 2018.

We are also looking internally at ways we can increase water conservation and I am pleased to announce that, beginning this Friday, World Water Day, I am issuing a challenge to the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) to increase water conservation at our wastewater treatment plants. The Bureau of Customer Services installed automated meter reading (AMR) devices at four plants, Coney Island, Oakwood Beach, Wards Island, and Jamaica, more than a year ago, which has allowed us to establish a baseline flow for each plant. The goal is to reduce consumption at each of the plants by 10 percent annually.

The Plant Chiefs will monitor the "My DEP Account" for each plant, through which the AMR device provides hourly, daily, monthly, and annual water use readings. The Chiefs will also raise awareness through staff training and will develop standard operating procedures to conserve water.

The Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis (BEPA), which is overseeing the city-wide demand management program, has taken initial surveys of the four plants and has produced a range of low cost or readily implementable water conservation initiatives. Rec-

ommended first steps include ensuring that every water system in the plant has a properly calibrated flow meter and adheres to basic water efficiency guidelines such as shutting off hydrants and hoses when not in use. Moving forward, BEPA and BWT will hold monthly meetings to discuss progress and address any challenges that may arise. They will also study the feasibility of more difficult and costly options such as using effluent for grit suspension, foam control in process tanks, and blower and compressor cooling. As we install AMR devices at our remaining 10 wastewater treatment plants, we will put in place similar programs and look for more ways to improve water conservation.

Each plant will be given 12 months to determine which water conservation initiatives work best for their facility and to implement the new programs. After monitoring daily water consumption at the four participating plants for the entire calendar year, the plants that have reached the 10 percent conservation goal will be recognized on Earth Day, April 22, 2014. I'd like to thank BEPA and BWT for taking the lead on this initiative. It is important that as we ask others to use less water we can demonstrate that we are doing our part as well.

In other news, the water and sewer Service Line Protection Program recently surpassed 58,000 enrolled homeowners since we launched the program in January. This important customer service initiative provides guaranteed repairs for covered damage to a homeowner's service line and we expect this number to continue to grow as more New Yorkers become aware of the great value that the program offers.

Focus on the Field



“We wear personal protective equipment and make an immediate life safety assessment to determine if we are facing a hazmat situation,” said Tawadrous. “Next we determine the area of possible contamination, take samples of the substance, and perform on-site analysis. Once we have an understanding of what we are dealing with we can determine the proper method of clean-up and disposal.”

“Every day we encounter unknown substances that present different challenges,” said DERTA Hazmat Unit Specialist **Ihab Tawadrous**. “This makes the job exciting but we have received a high level of training and are equipped with advanced field instrumentation that allow us to properly identify and handle a wide range of substances.”

Tawadrous received a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Polytechnic University and has been at DEP for the last ten years. As a Hazmat Unit Specialist, he responds to reports of chemical spills, abandoned containers, and possible intentional releases of hazardous materials. His team ensures proper handling and disposal in order to protect human health and the environment. When faced with an unknown substance, Tawadrous emphasizes that safety comes first.

Another important aspect of the job is proactively inspecting facilities that store and use hazardous chemicals as part of the Community Right-to-Know law. The law is intended to protect workers at the facility, as well as equip first responders with information about the contents of a facility in the event they have to respond to an emergency call at the location. The inspections often involve a full site inventory analysis that also includes an assessment in the proper storage and segregation of hazardous substances by class.

“Ihab’s expertise and dedication to his job make him a valuable asset to DEP’s Hazmat Unit,” said DERTA’s Executive Director **Greg Hoag**.

Although Tawadrous is on-call 24/7, he’s also the father of two children and he enjoys spending whatever free time he can with them.

Staten Island Bluebelt Cleanup



This past Saturday, DEP staff conducted another successful Bluebelt cleanup. The 80 volunteers collected between 65 and 70 cubic yards of trash and other large pieces of debris—or enough to fill up four large dump trucks! But there is still more work to be done. If you are interested in participating in an upcoming Bluebelt cleanup event, we are accepting volunteers for Saturday, March 30, and Saturday, April 6. To sign up, please email DEPVolunteerDay@dep.nyc.gov with your preferred date(s).

Mini Excavators



As part of the OpX program, this week DEP began training more than 50 construction laborers on the proper use and operation of mini excavators. This is the first step in what will be a three month long pilot to determine if employees can efficiently take over the responsibilities currently outsourced to a private backhoe contractor for such things as the repair and replacement of hydrants. DEP employees practiced operat-

ing the hydraulic breaker, lifting valves and fire hydrants, and digging trenches. This initiative is part of DEP’s much larger strategy to be the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation.

DEP Launches Fleet Share

Yesterday, DEP launched the Fleet Share program at our Lefrak City Headquarters. Through the program, drivers from bureaus across the agency can use an online system to reserve and drive vehicles. Fleet Share makes more than 80 light duty sedans and SUVs available to drivers 24/7, and it will increase the flexibility and effectiveness of the agency’s fleet. For more on the system, check out the website at nycdep.fastfleet.net, and email fleet@dep.nyc.gov for details on how to apply for an account.

Welcome Aboard



Last week 13 new employees attended orientation and as they begin their new assignments we hope everyone will take a moment to say hello and welcome them to DEP!

Akosua Adomako-Bonsu, **Anthony Gillespie**, and **Anand Kumaraswamy** with BWT; **Marlene Cohen** and **Nigel J. Williams** with BCS; **Vivian Brawer** with BLA; **Daniel P. Cunha** with BWS; **Frederick F. Farrell** with BWSO; **Betty Howell** with ACCO; **Nefertiti Howell** with Sustainability; **George McCauley** with BPS; **Marie Schneider** with Executive; and **Horace Zhang** with BEPA.

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