

Special Events Highlight Earth Day

This year, DEP will be celebrating both Earth Day, April 22, and Water Week, April 15–21, at the same time. Earth Day is an annual event when nations demonstrate support for the global environment, while Water Week recognizes the value of water to public health, environmental protection, economic development, and job creation. Please visit the [Earth and Water Week 2018 Calendar](#) for various special events highlighting these themes, including Brown Bag lunches (many offering PDH, Water and Wastewater credits), Rain Garden Walking Tours, a screening of Disney Nature’s “Earth,” and an Office Clean-Up Day. These events have been planned collaboratively with bureau representatives across the Agency, the OD&HR Wellness and Engagement Unit, and facilitated by OD&HR’s Workforce Development and Training team.



Last Earth Day, DEP volunteers picked up trash at a Rockaway Beach Clean-up.

Spotlight on Safety

2018 National Work Zone Awareness Week

National Work Zone Awareness Week, which is observed nationwide every April, took place last week with the theme “Work Zone Safety: Everybody’s Responsibility.” The program reminds motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians to be constantly alert and prepared for dynamic changes in and around traffic work zones (TWZs).

A distracted driver may not notice warning signs or flaggers in time to prevent a potentially fatal crash. Speeding, in-vehicle distractions, and inattentive or aggressive driving near TWZs are

costly mistakes that can include fines, jail time, and even the loss of a life.

DEP workers should be alert and pay attention to all safety instructions while driving near a work zone. Equal concern must be taken when DEP employees create a work zone setup and must follow the procedures listed in DEP’s [Traffic Work Zone Safety Policy](#).

All efforts from the driver and the TWZ setup crew contribute to safer roadways and saving lives. For more information visit [National Work Zone Awareness Week](#).

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.

Special Guest Commissioner’s Corner



Pamela Elardo
Deputy Commissioner
Wastewater Treatment

Last Wednesday, the Jamaica Wastewater Treatment Plant hosted the 31st annual Operations Challenge. Regarded as the Olympics of our industry, this competition is approached with high levels of passion and team spirit. The event, co-sponsored by DEP and New York Water Environment Association Metropolitan Chapter, featured five teams of Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) plant operators showcasing the expertise and skills required to operate and maintain New York City’s 14 wastewater treatment plants and 96 pump stations. This year’s participants hailed from Jamaica, Bowery Bay, 26th Ward, Newtown Creek, and Hunts Point (photos can be seen [here](#)).

All teams competed in three timed and judged events, including Collections, Worker Safety, and Maintenance. In addition, this year’s competition featured Laboratory and Wastewater Treatment Process events that were held earlier in the week.

When the morning-long intense competition was said and done, the two teams that garnered the highest scores were from the Jamaica and Bowery Bay plants—the same teams that advanced last year! They will move on to compete in the regional competition in New Jersey next month, and then the state competition in June in Lake George, NY. From there, winners of the statewide contest will participate in the national competition to be held from Sept. 29 to Oct. 3 in New Orleans. A team from DEP has gone to the national competition in 30 out of the last 31 years.

This competition shows the high level of expertise, skill, and knowledge of our crews, and the immense pride they take in protecting public health and the environment. I’d like to thank everyone who worked on this year’s Operations Challenge, especially **Art Spangell** (Director of Plant Operations), **Howard Robinson** (Plant Chief), **Kevin McCormick** (Plant Chief), **Joe Atkins** (Senior STW), **Courtney Anderson** (Plant Chief) and **William Grandner** (retired Plant Chief). And, best of luck to the Jamaica and Bowery Bay teams at the regional competition!



City Highlights Work Zone Safety



John Abruci (left), District Supervisor at Queens North Sewer Maintenance, and **Joseph Contorno** (right), a construction laborer, joined Commissioner Sapienza at the event.

Commissioner Sapienza joined last week with DOT Commissioner **Polly Trottenberg** to highlight the City's participation in [National Work Zone Awareness Week](#), observed this year from April 9–13. Participants stressed the importance of motorists' awareness of crews maintaining infrastructure on roads, bridges, sidewalks, and tunnels citywide. Also in attendance were NYC DDC Associate Commissioner for Infrastructure **Shah Jaromi**, and the New York State DOT Region 11 Director of Construction **Craig Ruyle**—agencies that also conduct significant work zone repair.

Infrastructure Upgrades for Tottenville



Construction has begun on a [\\$46 million infrastructure project](#) in the Tottenville section of Staten Island that will add storm sewers and catch basins along Amboy Road and Page Avenue, as well as adjoining side streets, to improve drainage and help mitigate flooding. In addition, more than two miles of new sanitary sewers will allow more than 200 homes to connect to the City sewer system and discontinue the use of septic tanks. The upgrades will also include the construction of new water mains and fire hydrants, which will improve water pressure and ensure a reliable supply of water for the future. DEP is providing the funding for the project and DDC will manage the construction.

Ashokan Fishing and Boating Events



DEP will host a [family fishing day and boat safety class](#) at Ashokan Reservoir on April 21. Both events are free and open to the public. Family Fishing Day at Ashokan Reservoir will run from 9am–2pm at the Frying Pan parking area off Route 28A. DEP Police will also host a boat safety class that day from 10–11am at Gate E1, located near the north end of the Dividing Weir Bridge on Reservoir Road. More information can be obtained at watershedevents@dep.nyc.gov, or by calling 800-575-LAND.

DEP Seeks Talented Recruits



DEP is actively recruiting engineering talent for full-time positions throughout the agency. Recent or upcoming graduates are urged to join us tomorrow, Wednesday, April 18, from 10am–4pm for a job fair at CUNY City College, NAC Ballroom, 1605 Amsterdam Ave, Manhattan. Attendees will learn more about individual bureaus (BWSO, BWT, BEDC, BEPA, and BEC), meet with DEP staff, hear about exciting programs and upcoming projects, and participate in “on the spot” interviews. Offers of employment will be made on-site! For additional information, please contact **Elyse Green** at egreen@dep.nyc.gov or 718-595-3422. A prior event was held April 5 at Cooper Union, in the Great Hall.

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