

Award Says BWT Is Excellent With Effluent



Two weeks ago, in an announcement about the improvement in the overall ecology of the East River and Long Island Sound, **Commissioner Holloway** said, “Years of steady and committed work to improve our treatment plants have already had measurable effects. Today, our harbor

water quality is the best it has been in 100 years and New York City is now meeting monthly secondary treatment standards for the first time ever. Improved water quality means more opportunities for New Yorkers to enjoy our waterfront—a critical component of PlaNYC, **Mayor Bloomberg’s** blueprint for a sustainable city.” Part of that success is due to the ongoing quality improvement in process control at our wastewater treatment plants.

Last Friday, Commissioner Holloway was joined by BWT DC **Vincent Sapienza** in presenting National Association of Clean Wa-

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Spotlight on Safety

West Nile Virus

We are in the midst of mosquito season. While it’s rare for anyone to contract West Nile Virus (WNV), it is prudent to take precautions to reduce your chances of exposure, especially if you work in the field on a routine basis. WNV is an illness transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes and symptoms range from mild, flu-like symptoms to more severe reactions. If you experience severe symptoms, let your supervisor know right away.

Some things field workers can do to protect themselves include:

- Covering as much skin as possible by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks.

- Using an insect repellent containing DEET on skin that is not covered by clothing and on the outside of clothing.
- After working, use soap and water to wash skin and clothing that has been treated with insect repellent.

The Health Department sprays various locations in the five boroughs to help prevent West Nile Virus infections. You should also know that standing water is a violation of the New York City Health Code. You can report standing water by calling 311 or visiting nyc.gov/health/wnv

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

If you have any lingering doubts about the incredible diversity of DEP’s operations and partnerships, my visit yesterday to the Dunbar Farm in Delaware County should put them to rest. I saw first-hand the state-of-the-art equipment that farmers in the watershed use to ensure that agriculture continues to play an important role in the economy, and at the same time protect water quality in the City’s watershed. This is due in large part to the work of the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC), a key DEP partner for nearly 20 years. WAC Chair **Fred Huneke** and Executive Director **Craig Cashman** led the tour, which included a stop to open our joint booth at the annual Delaware County Fair. (The pie was fantastic.) Thanks also to Working Lands Chief **John Schwartz**, who works with WAC staff and other partners every day to ensure that farming in the watershed is as protective as possible.

In the afternoon, Western Operations Chief **John Vickers** led site visits to the West Delaware Release Chamber on the Cannonsville Reservoir, as well as our newest boat launching site for local recreation. Cannonsville is at the westernmost edge of the City’s watershed, and with 98 billion gallons of storage capacity, it plays a critical role in meeting the City’s daily water supply needs. Moving from the country to the City, I joined Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Deputy Commissioner for Infrastructure **Eric Macfarlane** and his team on Madison Avenue this morning to activate a new 48-inch water main that was originally installed in the 1870s, and has been offline since the 1970s. The new main was installed using cutting-edge ‘trenchless’ technology, which minimized disruption on one of the City’s busiest commercial thoroughfares. BWSO DC **James Roberts**, Assistant Commissioner **Ed Coleman** and Chief of the Capital Development and Plan-



ning Division **James Garin** joined me to mark the completion of this major supply node for Manhattan’s East Side.

Whether in supply, distribution, or treatment, meeting water quality standards is something we have to do every day, and this week, five of our wastewater treatment plants received Peak Performance ‘Gold’ awards from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. That means that, for the entire 2009 calendar year, these plants had zero effluent violations, a truly remarkable performance that’s described in greater detail in this week’s feature story. Congratulations all!

Finally, last week, **Mayor Bloomberg** appointed **David Bragdon** as the new Director of the Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning & Sustainability—the group responsible for carrying out PlaNYC and all of the City’s ambitious sustainability initiatives. David joins the City after a very successful tenure as the President of the Portland, Oregon Metro Council, an elected body with oversight on the protection of natural areas, handling of solid waste and recycling, and other major municipal functions in Portland, Oregon. You can read more about his background here. David is a native New Yorker, so he knows how great the City’s water is; we’ll be working with him closely to keep it that way—and to continue to open as much of the City’s over 500 miles of waterfront as possible to recreation and development. Join me in welcoming David back to fill this critically important role.

Focus on the Field



Staten Island's "Ocean Cleaner":

Barbara Sallusto has been working for DEP since 1979. That was the same year that an accident at the Three Mile Island Plant stalled work in nuclear power design and operations, in which Barbara had hoped to start a career. Barbara instead found a satisfying job as a Process Control Engineer at DEP, working for the past eight years at the Oakwood Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant. Every morning, Barbara reviews the plant operating data, and then determines which adjustments need to be made to efficiently treat the 25 million gallons per day of sewage that the plant handles. She finds the work interesting, "especially since the weather conditions frequently change" and flows into the plant can reach more than 100 million gallons on a stormy day. "I also get to interact with many people including the plant

superintendent, operations staff, and laboratory chemists on a daily basis." Barbara reports to Process Control Area Engineer **Hayman Lochan**, conferring with him on particularly challenging issues that arise from time to time at the plant.

A New York State licensed professional engineer, Barbara earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Polytechnic Institute, followed up by a Master's Degree in 1986. Barbara previously worked in DEP treatment plants in Brooklyn and Manhattan; including Coney Island, Newtown Creek, and Wards Island, but her current location in Staten Island is her home borough. Barbara is proud of 12 year old twins, Justine and Michael, and of their interest in her work. Her son Michael loves hearing about sewage treatment and even offers Mom solutions for problems. Her daughter, Justine, the family's wordsmith, was 10 years old when she coined the term "ocean cleaner" in describing her Mom's job. The phrase certainly fits, because the Oakwood Beach plant received a 2009 Peak Performance Gold Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

DEP: Then & Now

Then: As part of the Alley Creek CSO project, DEP removed nearly 7,500 cubic yards of urban fill material that had been placed in the wetland decades earlier prohibiting tidal flushing. The fill was replaced with 8,200 cubic yards of sand. This section of Alley Creek near Northern Boulevard now has tidal flow restored and 8-acres of newly planted *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth cordgrass). In addition, during the removal of the fill material, a freshwater seep was discovered and the design was modified to also include the creation of a freshwater wetland. This is in March 2009.



Now: The same area in July 2010 shows the rapid growth of the *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth cordgrass) plugs and the development of the freshwater wetland. The freshwater seep discharges approximately 30 gpm into the wetland. The plugs had been planted 1' on center and within one year have nearly filled the area. The tidal wetland will now provide food and shelter for juvenile fish, other marine organisms and help cleanse the waters of Alley Creek. The freshwater wetland will increase biodiversity in the area and provide important adjacent habitat.



Press Box

A new section for Weekly Pipeline that will feature news stories that highlight the work of DEP.

"I think about performance every day. How are we performing as a utility? How do we define success across the agency? It's really important to define what success means, and then measure it." - Commissioner Holloway on IBM's The Business of Government Hour radio show. Click here to listen to the entire interview [🔗](#).

Did You Know?

... water is unique in that it is the only natural substance that is found in all three states—liquid, solid (ice), and gas (steam)—at the temperatures normally found on Earth.

<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/waterproperties.html>

(Award Says BWT Is Excellent With Effluent... - continued)

ter Agencies (NACWA) awards to BWT employees who work at the Hunts Point, Jamaica, Oakwood Beach, Red Hook, and Rockaway treatment plants. Those five plants had no effluent violations during 2009, earning NACWA's Peak Performance Gold Awards, which annually recognize facilities in the United States for their excellence in wastewater treatment. Certificates were presented to Superintendents **Courtney Anderson, Larry Brincat, Bob Rickey, and Jeff Weil**, and Process Control Engineers **Yu-Tung Chan, Sam Sadrak, Barbara Sallusto, and Bill Sedutto**.

Commissioner Holloway spoke with the award winners and acknowledged the superior achievement each plant had attained. "Operational excellence and doing it safely are what we

at DEP are focused on" he said. "We cannot say enough about it."

Courtney Anderson appreciated the acknowledgement and attributed being attentive as a contributing factor in his work. "You have to keep your nose to the grindstone." Bob Rickey mentioned that there were two sides to process control quality: "There is science, but there is also an art in evaluating influent and making the adjustments."

DC Sapienza discussed the built-in "creative dynamic" by having the process control engineers and the superintendents in separate chains of command. "That independence generates lively discussions on the best ways to optimize performance, and is a reason why DEP has been at the forefront of wastewater innovation."

Milestones

Congratulations to **Shrinivasan Sewgobind**, BWT, and his wife **Andrea** on the birth of their daughter. **Fiona Priyanka Sewgobind**, 7 lbs 4 oz, was born on July 26, 2010. All are doing well.

Event Calendar:

DEP's NYC Water-On-the-Go fountains will be out Tuesday through Sunday every week through Labor Day. For specific information, click here [🔗](#).

If anyone is interested in volunteering to staff a Water-on-the-Go fountain, please contact Eva Lynch at 718-595-3487.

If you have any DEP related events coming up that you would like listed in the event calendar, please send them to us at [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](#) [🔗](#).

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov [🔗](#)