

Commissioner's Corner



Last week, I joined Deputy Commissioner **Jim Roberts**, staff from DEP's Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations and City Council Members **I. Daneek Miller** and **Donovan Richards** on a tour of a recently completed project to ease localized street flooding in St. Albans, Queens. Working in collaboration with the elected officials and community organizations, DEP engineers leveraged advances in the department's Geographic Information Systems and hydraulic modeling capabilities to arrive at

a faster, targeted stormwater solution for this chronically challenging area. The work included connecting 18 street level catch basins to three blocks of new storm sewers that drain to an existing storm sewer located under 192nd Street. The \$1 million project began in June and is one of a number of new, targeted initiatives DEP is undertaking to help manage stormwater and alleviate local roadway flooding in neighborhoods throughout southeast Queens in advance of the ongoing construction of a \$6

billion comprehensive sewer system for the area.

St. Albans is also one of the first locations where DEP has piloted the coordination of its construction work with private utilities that also maintain essential infrastructure buried under the roadways. In this case, prior to DEP beginning its work, National Grid replaced its cast iron gas mains in the area, which were originally installed in 1939. DEP then replaced the existing sanitary sewer lines, which were installed in 1931, and the cast iron water mains dating from 1929, before installing the new storm sewers and catch basins. This work will ensure this critical underground infrastructure remains in a state of good repair for decades to come.

The post-World War II commercial and residential development of southeast Queens outpaced the extension of the City's sewer system and many neighborhoods in the area are not yet equipped with catch basins or storm sewers to drain precipitation from the roadways. As the multi-year effort to construct a comprehensive storm sewer system for the area continues through the City's capital construction program, DEP has initiated a number of smaller, targeted projects that can be advanced more rapidly and will help to manage stormwater and reduce flooding in the interim.

To identify the locations that are most prone to flooding, DEP consulted with local elected officials and community groups,



and analyzed 311 reports. Engineers then conducted field investigations during both wet and dry weather. The analysis considered the topography of the neighborhood, the hydraulic capacity and location of existing storm sewers, the relative elevations of existing sewers, and the nature and severity of the stormwater management challenges to identify specific areas where the strategic installation of storm sewers and catch basins could help to alleviate flooding.

The first two locations identified for upgrades and where work has already been completed include 113th Avenue between 156th and 157th Streets and 111th Avenue between 155th and 158th Streets. Analysis of additional locations is currently underway and DEP expects to approve additional projects in 2015.

To see more photos of the St. Albans Project, [click here](#). To view NY1's television coverage of the tour, [click here](#) or visit the [NY1 website](#) if you're outside of the office.

Spotlight on Safety

Extension Cord Do's and Don'ts

Extension cords are often used in office buildings and at worksites to provide electrical power to equipment or appliances. However, extreme caution should be taken when using them as improper use can damage property or cause injury and even death. Remember the following do's and don'ts for working safely with extension cords:

- unplug extension cords when not in use

Don't

- use an indoor extension cord in an outdoor environment
- attempt to plug extension cords into one another
- place cords under rugs or carpets or in busy areas

Do

- check cords for any damage
- keep extension cords away from water

For more information visit the [Congressional Accountability's website](#).



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.

T'is the Season



HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE: Bring a smile to a child by donating new and unwrapped toys during DEP's Holiday Toy Drive. Toys can be dropped off at [Lefrak headquarters](#) or at the office in [Valhalla](#). Please click on the links for each office to get more information, including preferred items for donation.

DECEMBER BLOOD DRIVE: To help ensure that blood will be available to those who need it, DEP is hosting a blood drive in the Grahamsville Region: United Methodist Church, 12/18 and 12/19, 10:00am to 3:00pm.

COAT DRIVE: Please consider donating your gently used [coats](#) at a collection bin located in the lobby of the Lefrak low-rise.

Thank you for helping to make the holidays brighter for those in need.

N'Ice New Buoys for Ashokan



Earlier today DEP announced the deployment of new technology at Ashokan Reservoir that will continually gather and transmit important water quality information below thick ice cover for the first time. The equipment—known as an under-ice water quality monitoring buoy—is the first of its kind to be installed on a New York City drinking water reservoir and will provide DEP with data in near-real time to ensure the highest quality drinking water is being sent to customers. For more information about the under-ice monitoring buoy [click here](#). To see additional photos [click here](#).

Press Box



“New York City’s water—soft, surprisingly pure, and endowed with the properties that make the city’s bagels and pizza dough world-beaters—may be cheap for its users. But keeping it cheap is an expensive, and amazing, proposition. The movement of a colorless liquid underground may inspire neither poetry nor particularly soaring prose. That doesn’t make the accomplishments of this system any less meaningful.”

Read Slate Magazine’s article naming New York City’s Water Supply System one of the seven wonders of the modern world [here](#).

“Kew Gardens residents can drink easy now that a \$10.6 million upgrade to their aging water system has been completed. The city has finished installing nearly 7 miles of new water mains to replace cast-iron lines—some of which were over a century old—in the Queens neighborhood.”

Read the entire Daily News article [here](#).

DEP Holiday Party



DEP employees and guests enjoyed dinner, dancing and raffle prizes throughout the evening at DEP’s December 10th Holiday Party at the Woodhaven Manor on Jamaica Ave. in Queens. To see more photos of the party [click here](#).

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