



Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Cas Holloway, Commissioner

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DEP Employees of the Month for November 2010

The Employee of the Month program recognizes DEP staff members that have exhibited outstanding personal effort, and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the people of New York City.

DEP is a great agency that delivers services that millions of New Yorkers depend on daily. Making good on that daily promise requires dedication and hard work of the nearly 6,000 employees of DEP. To nominate someone who has demonstrated uncommon dedication and excellence, fill out the nomination form with some basic information, such as the nominee's responsibilities, examples of extraordinary performance, and ways that they have set an example for others. The form is available on Pipeline, and you'll need to submit it by the tenth day following the end of the month. For more information, email Herb Roth at hroth@dep.nyc.gov.

The Employees of the Month for November, featured in this Weekly Pipeline Extra edition, were honored at a breakfast on December 23, with Commissioner Holloway, received a certificate, and had their names added to the Employee of the Month Board on the 3rd and 19th floors at Lefrak, and at the Kingston Office. These men and women set a standard for all of us to emulate and appreciate.



WT - Paul Kiskorna

Paul has been with DEP since September 1988 and currently serves as a Stationary Engineer Electric at BWT's Collection Facilities Operations (CFO). The CFO division maintains wastewater pumping stations, interceptors, regulators, and Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) facilities.

On November 18, 2010, Paul responded to a telemetry alarm originating from the unmanned Park Drive East Pumping Station in Queens. Upon arriving, Paul found that one of the main sewage pumps was not operating. (Non-operating sewage pumps can lead to a number of problems, including sewer overflows into the city's waterways.) Paul quickly determined that the discharge valve had failed and locked shut. This meant that sewage could not flow through this pipe, which could have caused a sewer backup or possibly an overflow. Paul and his crew figured out a way to make the repair, which was very complex given the configuration of the station. Thanks to Paul's expert skills and direction as well as teamwork, a raw sewage bypass into nearby Willow Lake was prevented.



WSO - Thomas Marrama

Tommy has been with DEP since June 1981. He currently serves as the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations Brooklyn Borough Manager. As part of the Bureau's reorganization, Tommy was appointed as the Borough Manager, which was the centerpiece of the Bureau's Field Operations organizational changes. Under Tommy's leadership, the Bureau has seen an improvement in the response time to priorities and complaints, as well as an increase in productivity.

Most recently, he worked with the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit to resolve a reoccurring sewage back-up problem for a constituent. Tommy's knowledge of the agency's water and sewer systems, ability to effectively communicate with all parties involved, and his follow up plan played a very integral part in the resolution of the problem. All parties expressed their thanks and appreciation for Tommy's hard work and dedication.



EDC - Stephanie Chao

Stephanie has been with DEP since June 2009. She currently serves as the Change Order manager in the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction's (BEDC) Contract Services Unit. Most recently, Stephanie was tasked with managing the entire portfolio of change orders for the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is composed of several hundred change orders at any given time. Her ability to handle the voluminous Newtown Creek work has served as a model to improve the overall efficiency of BEDC's Contract Services Unit. Stephanie also facilitated BEDC's transition from the citywide FMS2 (the City's financial management system) to the FMS3 system, as it pertains to the processing and registration of new contracts and change orders.

In addition, Stephanie served a key role in the agency-wide deployment of a new city-wide Automated Procurement Tracking System (APT) for change order processing. She recommended program refinements to improve the system, conducted both on-and-off site training sessions, and developed guidance documents for all agency and non-agency personnel using the APT system (i.e. DEP's operating bureaus and Office of Engineering Audits).



WS - Emily Sechny

Emily has been with DEP since January 2008. She currently serves as a Scientist/Water Ecologist in the Bureau of Water Supply and is responsible for the collection of water quality samples on each of the East-of-Hudson Divisions' 13 reservoirs and three controlled lakes, along with major tributaries, wastewater treatment plants, and terminal reservoir key points. Emily is routinely selected to handle special investigations due to her ability to adapt to extraordinary conditions and her keen observational skills.

On September 23, 2010, during the course of sampling at the Brewster Wastewater Treatment Plant, Emily learned that the plant bypassed some of its treatment processes the week earlier. Emily knew the significance of treatment bypassing and immediately called the director of her group. Because of that call, BWS's Regulatory Review Group started an investigation and found that a series of non-compliance events had not been reported by the plant. In another instance, in March 2010, Emily responded to a water leak in Yonkers that was suspected to have come from the Catskill Aqueduct. After taking water samples in a variety of ways due to challenging conditions at the site, the final results indicated that it was from the City of Yonkers supply system rather than the Catskill Aqueduct.



CS - Michelle Risher

Michelle has been with DEP since August 1996. Currently, Michelle serves as BCS's Training Director and is responsible for creating material for classes and teaching customer service training modules. In this role, she had a very important part to play in the rollout of the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) program earlier this year. Behind the scenes on the project, Michelle developed a comprehensive training program and trained the Call Center and other front line staff in the intricacies of the AMR system. The AMR system is difficult and challenging to learn at times, but Michelle's patience and technique with her students helped them to become proficient.

Commissioner's Award:



WS - Ira Stern

Ira Stern is the Regional Manager for the Grahamsville Region, Western Operations Division. He has demonstrated exceptional leadership and management skills organizing and inspiring his staff to achieve difficult goals.

Ira has taken a lead role for DEP since March 2008 in its public response to the Rondout West Branch Tunnel (RWBT) leak in the Town of Wawarsing. Ira formed the Wawarsing Public Advisory Committee and has guided its efforts, working with the affected residents to assist in addressing the various water problems they are experiencing, some of which may be attributable to the leak. He has spent countless hours communicating with the residents of Wawarsing, local elected officials, consultants and other DEP personnel to help resolve the issues while assisting in developing a long-term solution. This includes drafting the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) between DEP and the Town of Wawarsing, supervising the successful completion of the IGA obligations, and drafting the subsequent IGA. Ira has also been instrumental in providing input to senior DEP staff in several successful public meetings.

Ira's efforts have been an integral part of the successful progress to repair the Rondout West Branch Tunnel. He has enabled the region to meet its water supply mission and has assisted the agency response to the RWBT leak in Wawarsing, which reflects distinct credit upon him, the Bureau of Water Supply, and DEP.