



**Environmental
Protection**

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY

PIPELINE

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Employee Ideas Help to Clean Harbor



Through the OpX program, an idea from **Walter Goyzueta**, **Kevin Byrnes**, **Jim Aird**, and **Juan Manon** of the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment to have DEP employees collect floatable debris in New York Harbor, rather than outside contractors, has been realized. As part of the program, seven new employees—including one Mate, three Marine Oilers, one Port Superintendent, and two Marine Electronic Technicians have joined DEP to carry out the work. The program is estimated to yield an annual savings to the department of nearly \$500,000.

[Click here](#) to see more photos.

Spotlight on Safety

Hearing Protection

Prolonged exposure to noise exceeding certain levels can lead to hearing impairment, and DEP's Hearing Conservation Program is designed to prevent any temporary or permanent noise induced hearing loss to employees. Careful monitoring of workers in environments where they are likely to be exposed to excessive noise is important and they should

undergo testing to monitor their hearing over time. In instances where employees are exposed to noise levels exceeding 85 decibels averaged over eight working hours, hearing protection, annual hearing tests, and training is provided in accordance with the [Hearing Conservation Program](#). [Click here](#) to do a quick unofficial test of your hearing protection.

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



In certain areas of the city, including southeast Queens, commercial and residential development outpaced the extension of the City's sewer system. Many of these neighborhoods are not yet equipped with catch basins or storm sewers to properly drain precipitation from the roadways. During the last decade, DEP invested more than \$380 million to extend sewers throughout southeast Queens and a similar capital investment is planned over the next 10 years. As this decades-long, \$6 billion capital program continues, DEP engineers have been able to leverage advances in GIS and hydraulic modeling capabilities to arrive at faster, more focused solutions for certain chronically challenging areas.

Based primarily on input from elected officials, community groups, and reports of flooding logged with the City's 311 system, engineers conducted a block by block analysis of the most flood prone locations to identify specific areas where the installation of storm sewers and catch basins, or other mitigation projects, could help to better manage stormwater in advance of the planned construction of a more comprehensive sewer system for the area. The analysis considered the topography of the neighborhood, the hydraulic capacity and location of existing storm sewers, the relative elevations of existing sewers and groundwater, 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 were 113th Avenue between 156th and 157th Streets, and 111th Avenue between 155th and 158th Streets, and both projects were recently completed. Analysis of additional locations is currently underway and DEP expects to approve other projects in 2014.

I'd like to recognize the DEP team that has been focused on this important work, including **Mahsa Forkin** and **Katie Mockler** for project management, **Ben Mancell** and **Stephanie Fowler** for mapping and data analysis, **Kamil Dyrda**, **Yesenia Lendor-Montero**, **Donald Eloi**, **Abiodun Quadri**, **Jean-Denis Lucien**, **Eugenio Cadiz**, **Mark Stettner**, and **John Callies** for field inspections, and **Alex Vega** for construction.

DEP has also been evaluating the performance of three pilot "reverse seepage" basins that were installed last year and are intended to couple the traditional stormwater management functions of catch basins with the potential corollary benefit of reducing residential and commercial basement flooding. Investigations are currently underway to evaluate locations where this innovative approach, done in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, would be feasible and could effectively improve drainage and flooding conditions.

Building out and upgrading the sewer system in southeast Queens is one of the operational goals outlined in *Strategy 2011-2014*. As part of DEP's capital construction program, there are numerous projects either ongoing or in the planning and design phase, to achieve that objective. These include the final phase of the \$175 million Springfield Gardens upgrade that will be completed in the fall of 2014 and will bring nine miles of storm sewers and eight miles of sanitary sewers to the area.

Focus on the Field



Assistant Civil Engineer Alex Vega grew up in the Bronx and graduated from Herbert H. Lehman High School before earning a degree in civil engineering from Manhattan College. He began his career working for a private construction firm but after speaking with **Saurin Parikh** and **Luis Caminero** at a job fair about opportunities with DEP, he applied for a job and later joined DEP as a Civil Engineer Intern for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operation's (BWSO) Emergency Construction division.

As an intern Vega worked under Resident Engineer **Angelo Lorenzo** on the installation of trunk water mains under Atlantic Avenue and then became the Resident Engineer himself on the Bronx Botanic Garden Bluebelt project. Once that was complete, he became the Resident Engineer for the Queens North Emergency Sewer Contract, which is responsible for any breaks on a line between eight and 36 inches in diameter. He also pitched in at the collapse of a large sewer under 92 Street in Bay Ridge.

Earlier this year, Vega was promoted to his current title and added the Queens South emergency contract to his responsibilities. This work includes the initiative currently underway to identify areas in southeast Queens where the installation of complementary storm sewers would be feasible and would help manage stormwa-

ter in advance of the build-out of a more comprehensive sewer system for the area. Vega has been involved with both the field work and construction of these projects and the first two, on 111 and 113 Avenues in South Jamaica, were recently completed.

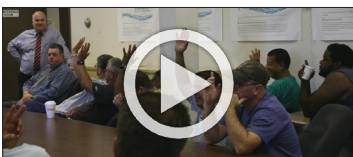
"Anytime there is a sewer break it is important for public health and safety that we get it repaired as fast as possible," said Vega. "The work in southeast Queens is especially meaningful because the residents are so appreciative of our efforts."

These are generally areas where a full storm sewer system will be built in the coming years, so any sewer installation must be done precisely so that whatever short term measures are done now, will also allow for the future build out of the comprehensive system. Working with his colleagues and **Daniel Lefkowitz**, Deputy Chief of Emergency Construction, and **Fathi Husein**, Supervisor of Resident Engineers, Vega considers the location of existing utilities and sanitary sewer lines to ensure there will be room for a storm sewer and the grade and pitch of the roadway to ensure it will drain to a catch basin. They also take into account the capacity of the existing storm sewers as well as their elevation before conducting a cost analysis and submitting the job for approval.

"Alex has done a terrific job with every assignment he's been given and has made himself an important part of the BWSO team," said **Michael Sullivan**, Chief of Engineering and Construction.

Vega is currently studying for the New York State professional engineer exam while he accrues the necessary field experience. He still calls the Bronx home and is a proud fan of all the New York sports teams.

Extra, Extra!



Please take a moment to view our latest news segment on [Career Development and Engagement Opportunities at DEP](#). If you have any story ideas for future news segments please email them [here](#).

Press Box

AND DON'T FORGET TO THANK YOUR FRIENDLY SEWER WORKERS: "By midmorning Tuesday, the sewer workers had taken apart five catch basins along Central Park West... forecasts were calling for two to four inches of rain by Thursday morning... The street drains are built to handle rainfalls of an inch and three-quarters per hour, more than triple what was predicted for the coming storm. Nevertheless... crews were out from Monday night into Tuesday morning, mucking out the basins and power-flushing them with water at hundreds of pounds of pressure per square inch... With the Thanksgiving Day Parade, we wanted to pay special attention to Central Park West."

View the entire New York Times story [here](#).

DEP Winter Blood Drive

One of every three people will need a life-saving blood transfusion at some point during their lifetime and a continuous and steady supply is necessary because blood is perishable. Please help by donating at the below locations and times:

LeFrak Headquarters: 3rd Floor Cafeteria, 12/4 and 12/5, 7:45 am to 1:30 pm; **Kingston/Catskill Region:** 51 Albany Avenue, 12/4, 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm; **Downsville Region:** Downsville Fire Hall, 12/11, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm; **Grahamsville Region:** DEP Grahamsville parking lot, 12/11 and 12/12, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm; **Kensico/Highland/Sutton Park Region:** Sutton Park - 2nd Floor, 12/12, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.

MISSED BLACK FRIDAY OR CYBER MONDAY? DON'T WORRY, OUR PRICES ARE LOWER.

Stop by one of our selling events below.

- **Newtown Creek**
Tuesday, December 10
10:00 – 11:30am
2nd floor multimedia room, support bldg
- **Tallman Island**
Wednesday, December 11
1:30 – 3:00pm
Cafeteria, main bldg
- **Kingston**
Friday, December 13
12:00 – 2:00pm
Location TBD
- **LeFrak**
Tuesday, December 17
12:00 – 2:00pm
18th floor conference room



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