

Commissioner's Corner



Vincent Sapienza
Commissioner

DEP is proud that a panel of experts from across the country has strongly endorsed the Operations Support Tool (OST) for guiding the operation of New York City's drinking water supply, managing risks such as droughts and turbidity events, and planning for the future effects of climate change. We are especially grateful that the independent review, which was released by the

[National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine](#), found OST to be "one of the most advanced and complex support tools for water supply operations of its kind in the world."

The City also appreciates the many good recommendations that experts provided to improve and maintain OST in the years ahead. We understand that working with the National Weather Service to improve forecasting will be key to the success of OST, and keeping the model updated with our most recent data will maximize its accuracy. These

and other recommendations in the report underscored that DEP's investment in our digital infrastructure is crucial to the well-informed operation of our water supply now and in the future.

The expert review also highlighted the need for investment in our workforce, specifically to pass down decades of knowledge and expertise to the next generation of DEP employees. OST is a model that compiles the vast scientific information needed for decisions we make every day, but those decisions are ultimately made by people. DEP is fortunate to have some of the best engineers, scientists and planners of any water utility in the world. The report correctly notes that their institutional knowledge must be captured to train future employees who will manage OST and the nearly 300 facilities that comprise New York City's water supply.

I want to thank the National Academies and its expert panel



for their thorough and honest review of OST. I'd also like to thank the dozens of employees who helped to develop OST, operate the model every day to help us make informed water supply management decisions, and our colleagues who provided extensive amounts of data to the National Academies for its comprehensive and independent study.

Spotlight on Safety

Bullying Prevention

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. Bullying occurs frequently in workplaces and is a leading cause of poor productivity and low morale. Bullying usually involves a repeated and intentional pattern of actions that are intended to intimidate, isolate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people; this includes cyberbullying.

Bullying can include:

- spreading malicious rumors or innuendo about a person
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work
- yelling or using profanity with the intention to intimidate
- frequent unjust criticism
- belittling a person's opinions, especially in front of colleagues

- tampering with a person's work equipment or belongings

The following acts are not considered bullying:

- one-time acts of rudeness
- performance management or coaching from a supervisor that is done in a consistent, fair and respectful way
- disciplinary action of an employee who violates DEP's Uniform Code of Discipline or other written policies

If you are being bullied, firmly tell the person that their behavior is not acceptable and ask them to stop. If this is ineffective or you feel unsafe, walk away and do not retaliate. Keep a record of the events and report them to your supervisor, manager or directly to the Workplace Violence (WPV) Coordinator. For more information, visit the [Workplace Violence Prevention](#) page.

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.



Flu Shots Now Available



Flu season is almost here! Getting your flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu and its complications. WorkWell NYC offers free flu shots for all City employees, dependents and retirees. Worksite flu clinics provide employees with a quick, convenient and effective way to protect themselves from this highly contagious disease.

The WorkWell NYC Free Flu Vaccination Program will be onsite at the following locations:

- **Lefrak:** Oct. 10, 12pm–3pm; Oct. 23, 10am–2pm; Oct. 26, 9:30am–2pm; and Nov. 2, 12pm–2pm in the 6th Floor Lecture and Training Rooms
- **Newtown Creek WWTP:** Oct. 4, 7–8:30am in the Multipurpose Room
- **Kingston:** Oct. 16, 7:30am–1pm in Training Rooms 1 and 3
- **Valhalla:** Oct. 25, 9am–1pm in the Training Room
- **Wards Island WWTP:** Oct. 25, 8–9am in the New Admin. Building Training Room

To view clinics available to NYC employees, visit the [online scheduling tool](#) and enter the username “nyc” and the password “flushot.” Download the consent form and complete it in advance of your appointment to save time. To schedule your worksite appointment over the phone, call 866-481-4391.

Delaware County Comms Tower

The Delaware County Department of Emergency Services and DEP recently announced an agreement that will help to improve emergency communications throughout Delaware County by constructing [a new 180-foot-tall tower](#) on city-owned property near Cannonsville Reservoir. DEP issued a land-use permit to Delaware County in August, allowing the county to construct the tower on property the City has owned since Cannonsville Reservoir was built in the 1960s. The new communications infrastructure will be located on Tower Lane in the Town of Tompkins, about 500 feet south of the existing fire tower. The work in Tompkins is part of a broader effort to upgrade the county’s emergency communications network by more than doubling the number of towers from seven to 15.

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

Breaking Ground in Arkville



The Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) and DEP hosted a ceremonial groundbreaking last Friday for a 35,000-square-foot building near Arkville that will house a total of more than 70 employees from both agencies. The [new office complex](#) is located on Delaware County Route 38. The event signaled the start of construction on the \$19 million project, and ushered in a new phase in the partnership between DEP and the nonprofit corporation that administers several water quality protection programs in the Catskill-Delaware Watershed where most of the City’s water originates. CWC will own the office complex, and DEP will lease space for up to 44 employees. The arrangement will improve communication between the two organizations and provide a one-stop shop for residents and businesses who are affected by watershed regulations and eligible for benefits and assistance programs. The new building will also allow DEP to vacate a number of temporary office trailers while moving some employees to a location that is more geographically central to its work in the watershed.

Green Playground Opens in Queens



Deputy Commissioner **Angela Licata** recently joined Queens Borough President **Melinda Katz** and The Trust for Public Land at I.S. 250Q—The Robert F. Kennedy Community School to cut the ribbon on a new, state-of-the-art, green playground. The [\\$1.2 million project](#) includes a running track, turf field, basketball hoops, tennis courts, trees, outdoor classroom space, game tables, and new fitness equipment. Green infrastructure elements, made possible through funding provided by DEP, will capture 1.2 million gallons of stormwater per year, which will improve the health of Flushing Creek. Many thanks to BEPA’s Green Infrastructure team, including Assistant Commissioner **Pinar Balci**, **Margot Walker**, **Patrick O’Connor**, and **Samantha Young**, for working hard to transform asphalt schoolyards like this one into new resilient, vibrant community amenities for both students and neighborhood residents to enjoy.