

Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*

Complementing DEP's ambitious green infrastructure program are significant investments being made in more traditional "grey" infrastructure upgrades, which together will help to further improve the health of our waterways. One such project hit a milestone last week with the delivery of a 26-ton micro-tunneling machine to a shaft site in Queens located between North Conduit Avenue and the Belt Parkway in South Ozone Park.

The machine, along with one other that will be delivered and launched in February, will be used to install one 54-inch, and two 36-inch interceptor sewers under the Belt Parkway. Once completed, these new installations will provide significant additional capacity within the area's drainage system and reduce sewer overflows into Bergen Basin. In tandem, work



Vincent Sapienza, DEP's Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Engineering, Design & Construction, is a guest commentator this week.

is also underway to install three hydraulic levees, or bending weirs, at key junction points within the area's sewer network that will optimize the carrying capacity of the pipes during rain storms and reduce sewer overflows into both Bergen Basin and Thurston Basin. Modeling shows that the joint \$40



million upgrade will ensure that an additional 300 million gallons of combined sewer flow are routed to the Jamaica Wastewater Treatment Plant each year, rather than being discharged untreated into the tributaries of Jamaica Bay. Installation of the three levees

is expected to be completed by the end of the summer and construction of the new interceptor sewers is expected to be completed in early 2017.

To read more click [here](#), and to see maps and renderings click [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

Treading on Thin Ice

During the winter months, it is important to take precautions while working in areas that are near frozen bodies of water. Ice is never 100 percent safe and thickness can vary from one area to another. Look for thin ice indicators such as cracks, flowing water, cloudiness and snow accumulation. Never work alone near ice and bring along any required emergency equipment.

If someone does fall through the ice, call for emergency help

immediately. DO NOT automatically try and venture onto the ice to reach them, as you may fall through yourself. Instead, try to reach them with a long object or rope and pull them to safety.

If you do fall through ice:

- Try to remain calm.
- Do not remove any clothing.
- **DO NOT** attempt to swim unless a floating object or another person can be reached.

For more information on ice safety and rescue [click here](#).



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.

#Sustainability



In the footprint of the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant's de-commissioned thickeners, Waste Management is building what will eventually be an enclosed receiving tank for organic bioslurry. Once the facility is completed, Waste Management will deliver bioslurry (pre-processed organic food waste) to Newtown Creek where it will be added to the digester eggs and further broken down along with the sludge from the wastewater treatment process. This is part of a three-year demonstration project with Waste Management and the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority to assess the operational impact of large-scale co-digestion on the wastewater treatment process.

NY Cares 30th Annual Coat Drive



Many thanks to everyone who donated a coat to the NY Cares 30th Annual Coat Drive. DEP collected 175 coats during the drive. With the onset of frigid weather conditions in our area, and the potential for a major storm on the horizon, each donated item will go a long way to helping the recipients stay warm this winter. Thank you also to **Joe Sokolowski** of Public Affairs for coordinating the coat collections and drop offs.

Prescription for Addiction

The Dangers From Your Medicine Cabinet

A note from **Kaitlyn Maceira**, LMHC, CASAC, with the Employee Assistance Program

Anyone who has ever had a tooth pulled or experienced lower back pain has probably received a prescription for opiates from their doctor, usually in the form of a 30-day, as needed, supply. Maybe a person takes five Percocets or OxyContin for a week's worth of pain, and puts the other 25 pills safely secured in their family medicine cabinet. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, three out of four heroin addicts started by using prescription pills, and it's happening in our backyard.

Prescription pill use is popular with the adolescent population because it is easily accessible. Prescription drugs are also extremely addictive due to their pain killing component. People who begin to abuse prescription pills often run out of the drug quickly and will oftentimes complain of pain to different doctors in order to get more prescriptions, a term commonly known as "doctor shopping." However, with new electronic medical records and up-to-date insurance files, duplicate or excessive prescriptions, without medical necessity,

are flagged and the supply of medication is halted. At this point, the opiate abuser begins to buy prescription pills "off the street."

The switch to heroin is usually made when people find it difficult to maintain their prescription pill addiction due to the high costs. Heroin is not only a cheaper drug but also the "most rapidly acting" opiate. According to NBC News, a "stamp bag" of heroin can be purchased on the street in New York City for anywhere from \$10-\$20. Costs of heroin have become inexpensive due in part to the heroin being diluted, or "cut," with baking soda, starch, or powdered milk prior to being sold, making heroin less expensive but also giving it a deadlier potential. A study by the Centers for Disease Control showed a 39 percent increase in deaths by heroin overdose from 2012-2013. Over the next two months, we will feature articles providing more in-depth information regarding the adolescent heroin addiction in New York State and the availability of treatment. As always, free and confidential help, information and support is available to all DEP employees and their dependents by calling the NYC EAP at (212) 306-7660 or by email at eap@olr.nyc.gov.



Yoga @ DEP

Free Yoga sessions are being offered almost every Friday for Lefrak employees from 12:10pm to 12:50pm at the Rego Community Center. If you don't have a yoga mat, you can reserve one in advance by contacting Melissa Siegel at 718-595-7418 or melissas@dep.nyc.gov by 3pm the day before the class. More information, including a link to the required waiver form, can be found on the home page of the Source in the [Announcements section](#).

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