

Living City: A Billion Gallons a Day



“It is the gold standard of urban water supplies. The New York City watershed was assembled during the 20th century, and the system’s underground aqueducts are considered an engineering marvel.”

View the entire NY Times video [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

VISION ZERO

Approximately 4,000 people are seriously injured and more than 250 are killed each year in traffic related collisions in New York City, according to the Department of Transportation (DOT). The Mayor’s Vision Zero Action Plan aims to end traffic related deaths and injuries within New York City. The plan has created slow zones and additional speed cameras,

especially near schools. Starting November 7, 2014, the speed limit on all New York City streets will be 25 MPH unless otherwise posted. This new speed limit will be enforced by the NYPD and with speed enforcement cameras. By getting New York drivers to slow down, we will prevent crashes, protect New Yorkers from injury and save lives.

For more information about the new NYC speed limit laws and slow zones, visit the [DOT website](#) and [Vision Zero Homepage](#).

Commissioner’s Corner

Earlier today, DEP announced the launch of a new program to provide lower income homeowners in New York City with an automatic credit to their water bills. The Home Water Assistance Program, first introduced in May when the de Blasio Administration announced the lowest water rate increase in nearly a decade, will provide a credit of \$115.89 to the water bills of more than 12,500 homeowners. DEP has partnered with the Human Resources Administration, which administers the Federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), to identify qualified one to four family homeowners that received a HEAP benefit during the 2013-2014 heating season. The credit will appear on the next water and sewer bill for qualified customers. The program follows an initiative to freeze the minimum charge for homeowners who use less than 100 gallons of water each day, which resulted in more than 25 percent of DEP customers, many of them senior citizens, receiving no increase in their water bills this year.

As part of DEP’s commitment to providing the highest quality service while ensuring effective and fair revenue collection, a number of initiatives have been implemented since 2011. These programs include the completion of a network of Automated Meter Reading devices that ensure water bills are based on actual consumption and that allow customers to access data about their water use in near real time, a leak detection system that has already saved customers more than \$55 million, the Water Debt Assistance Program, which helps property owners at risk of foreclosure manage their water and sewer debt, and the replacement of thousands of large meters on industry-recommended cycles.

Earlier this year, DEP also adopted a number of customer service improvements that were approved by the New York City Water Board in May. They include:

- **Freezing the minimum charge** DEP set the minimum charge for customers who use less than 100 gallons of water each day at last year’s rate. As a result, roughly 25 percent of single family homes—many of them



owned by seniors—saw no water rate increase this year.

- **Expanding the leak forgiveness program** Through the Leak Notification Program, DEP has saved customers more than \$55 million in leak-related charges since 2011. Until recently, leaks on maintainable fixtures, such as toilets and faucets, were not included in DEP’s leak forgiveness program. To encourage a quick response to those leaks, DEP has extended partial forgiveness of leak-related charges to any customer who fixes a leak that resulted in a high bill within 120 days.
- **Extending the deadline for customers to file an appeal with the Water Board** Until recently, customers had 30 days to file an appeal with the Water Board. DEP has extended that deadline to 60 days.
- **Halting the lien sale process for customers with a pending appeal** DEP will exclude any customer from the lien sale list who has a pending appeal on the date the 90-day list is published. The change will ensure customers have a fair shot to appeal a bill they believe is unwarranted.
- **Suspending interest for customers with a “catch-up” bill after Automated Meter Reader (AMR) installation** DEP now grants customers who are issued a “catch-up” bill after the installation of AMR 90 days to pay their bill, interest free. The change will reduce unanticipated charges on customers’ bills.

For more information about the Home Water Assistance Program, [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.

Aqueduct Gets Submarine Scan

Last weekend, a 1,200-pound Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) was lowered into the Delaware Aqueduct through a 1,500-foot deep vertical shaft in Kerhonkson with a mission to pinpoint where leaks are in the Wawarsing section of the 84-mile tunnel. Teams of operators closely monitored four computer screens for 53 hours straight. Using high-tech cameras, and a special arm that injects a colored dye into suspected cracks, engineers identified two small cracks in the tunnel, confirming that the main source of leaks from the aqueduct are located in Roseton. DEP is currently constructing a bypass tunnel around that section of the Aqueduct. The small cracks identified by the AUV will be repaired from the inside of the Aqueduct when it is taken out of service to connect the bypass tunnel.



Kudos Corner



Last week, DEP celebrated its 30th Employee Recognition Day ceremony at DC37 headquarters. **Commissioner Lloyd** and **DC37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts** presided over the ceremony, where a total of 789 employees were recognized for their length of service, perfect attendance, or both. [Click here](#) to see more photos.

Nice Wheels



Bureau of Water and Sewer Operation's crews rely on a fleet of heavy duty construction vehicles to carry out all in-house repairs to the City's vast water and sewer systems. To ensure that field workers are able to efficiently and safely complete this essential work, DEP is investing in the next generation of vehicles with state of the art features, including emissions reduction technology. Pictured is the new construction vehicle, which is currently being piloted in the field. These trucks are specifically customized for DEP and come equipped with an air compressor to power jack hammers and air pumps, and a hydraulic system that operates a lifting hoist. It also has a built in generator, night lights and lockable tool compartments for proper storage and protection of equipment. In addition, the truck bed has been lowered to allow for easier access.

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