

Commissioner's Corner



On October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall in New Jersey, pushed water up the New York Bight to the City, and caused a record 14-foot storm surge. DEP employees heroically worked through the storm clearing flooded roadways, treat-

ing wastewater, securing our infrastructure, and preparing for the daunting tasks we faced in the aftermath. More than 1,100 DEP employees lived in the flood zones and were directly affected by the storm but, nonetheless, worked tirelessly through many

long days and nights to secure the city. In the days following Sandy, DEP was on the front lines of the recovery effort, clearing downed trees and other debris, pumping flood waters, providing drinking water to residents in Breezy Point, monitoring air quality, and helping other utilities restore power and water to millions of New Yorkers.

to safeguard equipment and minimize disruption in critical services at our wastewater facilities. This work includes cost-effective measures, such as elevating equipment, waterproofing buildings, and replacing traditional pumps with submersible pumps. Work has already been completed at the Manhattan and Gowanus Canal Pumping Stations, and is currently underway at the North River Wastewater Treatment Plant. Work will begin shortly at the Tallman Island and Wards Island Wastewater Treatment Plants, while upgrades are being designed for several other facilities.

In many ways, Hurricane Sandy confirmed what we already knew—climate change is causing sea levels to rise and increasing the intensity of coastal storms. As we mark the fifth anniversary of Sandy and salute the hard work of so many DEP employees both during the storm and in the days and weeks that followed, we also measure our progress in hardening our facilities against a changing climate.

As we complete each of these upgrade projects, our wastewater system becomes more resilient and New York City is better prepared for a changing climate. Thank you all for your continued efforts to protect public health and the environment in New York City.

As part of the New York City Wastewater Resiliency Plan, DEP is investing approximately \$400 million

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Reporting and Investigation Policy

The Office of Environmental, Health and Safety (OEHS) has developed a new Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy. This policy will be effective as of January 5, 2018.

Management System (AIIMS) for recording and tracking incidents, near misses, and hazard identifications, as well as the resultant investigation workflow and corrective actions.

This policy establishes and outlines a framework and protocol for identifying, analyzing, and documenting workplace environmental health and safety (EHS) related incidents, near misses, and hazard identifications in accordance with applicable federal, state and local EHS regulations and requirements, as well as general industry best practices. This policy applies to all DEP facilities, employees, and contractors. OEHS will also release into production the Audit and Incident Information

All employees should receive initial awareness training on this policy. Employees involved in key roles associated with the review and investigations will receive additional training in both AIIMS and investigation procedures by their Bureau EHS. OEHS will distribute all necessary training documents and additional guidance to Training Coordinators, EHS Liaisons, and EHS Directors.

To view the EHS Reporting and Investigation Policy 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.



Green Playground Opens in Harlem



DEP joined the New York Road Runners and the Trust for Public Land this week to unveil a state-of-the-art green playground at CS 154 Harriet Tubman Learning Center, in Harlem. The schoolyard, which is also shared by the Democracy Prep Endurance Middle School, was designed with help from the school's students and now includes new green infrastructure components that will allow the space to capture almost 700,000 gallons of stormwater runoff each year, helping to improve the health of the nearby Hudson River. The playground also operates as a public open space during weekends, holidays, and school vacations.

Diwali Celebration



Hundreds of staffers came together last week to celebrate DEP's diversity and Diwali, the ancient cultural festival of light that encourages the spread of compassion, love, togetherness, and peace. The celebration was held at Joya Hall in Rego Park, and traditional dishes and musical performances were enjoyed by all.

Bullying Prevention Month

As the month comes to a close, we'd like to remind staffers that October is National Bullying Prevention Month. Bullying is a pattern of intentional acts designed to intimidate or humiliate. If you witness or experience bullying:

- If possible, request the offender to stop the behavior.
- Report bullying incidents to your supervisor or manager, or DEP's Workplace Violence Prevention Coordinator.

For more information, visit the [DEP Workplace Violence Prevention Program](#) on The Source.

Environmental, Health and Safety Day



DEP's first ever Safety Day was held on Oct. 26 at Lefrak and featured presentations from Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** and Assistant Commissioner **Persis Luke**, Environmental, Health & Safety. The event, "Safety Starts With Us," also featured a keynote talk from **Heinz Wendroff**, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Compliance Assistance Specialist, and stressed the importance of safety both in the workplace, and at home. Throughout the day, information tables were set up in the 3rd floor Employee Lounge and free hearing tests were held in the 20th floor conference room. Additionally, participants entered into Escape Room Challenges and enjoyed a screening of "Deepwater Disaster: The Untold Story," which tells the story of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig disaster. A Safety Day event will also be held Nov. 1 in Valhalla and feature a keynote presentation from the Compliance Assistance Specialist for the OSHA Tarrytown Area Office.

Get Your Beauty Rest

A note from **Kaitlyn Maceira**, LMHC, CASAC, with the Employee Assistance Program (NYC EAP).

Who wants to feel more refreshed? More well-rested? I'm pretty sure we all do. So what is the solution? Get more sleep! Sure, in what lifetime? Getting enough sleep is definitely much easier said than done. Though these tips may not give you the full, restful night's sleep we all crave, I am hoping that it does help give you a couple of extra Z's.

Try avoiding food, drinks, and other substances like caffeine, alcohol, and sugar. These can stimulate the mind and body, having a negative impact on your ability to sleep soundly.

Take some time getting ready to sleep. Allow your mind and body time to wind down from the day.

The bright light of your phone or tablet stimulate your brain and interfere with sleep so it's better to read from a paper book or magazine than use technology.

Count sheep—it actually works! Visualizing and counting distracts us, in a good way, from racing thoughts that may be inhibiting our sleep pattern.

Retrain your brain so that your mind and body know that when you're in bed, it's time to sleep. Once you're in bed, if you are not asleep in 15 minutes, get out of bed. Do another activity until you feel tired enough and then give sleeping another go. Staying in bed, tossing and turning, can create anxiety and stress that becomes associated with your bed.

If you, or someone you know, is having difficulty with sleep, rest, racing thoughts, anxiety or other symptoms interfering with their daily life, free and confidential support services are available to all NYC employees and their family members through the NYC EAP. Contact us by phone at 212-306-7660 or email at eap@olr.nyc.gov.

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