

Commissioner's Corner



Vincent Sapienza
Commissioner

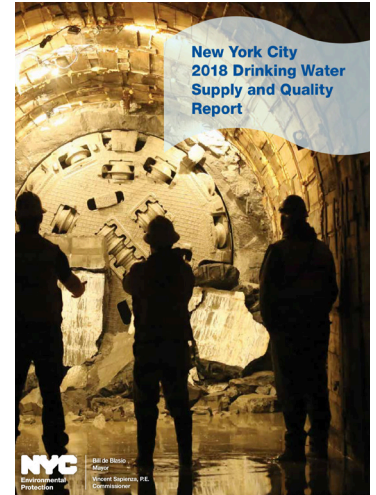
On behalf of my nearly 6,000 colleagues at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), I am proud to report that New York City continues to enjoy some of the best tap water in the world. In 2018, we continued to deliver more than 1 billion gallons of clean and delicious drinking water to nearly 10 million people every day. Many communities throughout the United States remain concerned about the safety of their public water supplies. Here in New York, we are fortunate to have a water supply that is well protected and operated by dedicated scientists, engineers,

and other professionals who have earned admiration among their colleagues throughout the world. The evidence of New York City's high-quality drinking water is in the numbers and on your taste buds.

In the recently-released [2018 Drinking Water Supply and Quality Report](#), you will see that New York City's drinking water continued to meet or surpass every national and state standard for quality. These data are based on 53,200 samples that were collected by DEP scientists throughout our reservoir system, and at nearly 1,000 street-side sampling stations in every neighborhood across the city. Those samples were analyzed 654,000 times by scientists working in our four water quality

laboratories. Robotic monitoring stations on our reservoirs provided another 1.3 million tests to ensure DEP was sending the best-quality water to New York City at all times. The excellent scientific results were validated last summer by our customers and other New Yorkers. In 2018, New York City earned first place in the New York State Tap Water Taste Test competition. That honor was based on hundreds of people who lined up in New York City and at the state fair in Syracuse to taste water from dozens of cities, towns, and villages. In the end, New York City earned the blue ribbon for our great-tasting water.

None of these good results happen by accident. Our drinking water system relies on vast reservoirs, large dams, hundreds of miles of aqueducts, and thousands of miles of water mains. Steady and focused investment in drinking water infrastructure is key to the future of New York City. That is why you will also find in this report news about a number of infrastructure investments DEP is making now and in the decades ahead. In 2018, we announced a \$1.2 billion tunneling project in Westchester County to improve operational resiliency and flexibility



between a key reservoir and treatment facility. The largest repair project in the history of our water supply system, the \$1 billion Delaware Aqueduct Bypass Tunnel, continued to make steady progress last year as a tunneling machine excavated toward the Hudson River. You will find details about these and other projects in the pages that follow.

As we look forward to the rest of 2019 and beyond, I want to thank you for entrusting DEP with the operation, protection, and maintenance of your drinking water supply. We take great pride in delivering the best water to millions of New Yorkers every day.



Spotlight on Safety

Severe Weather: Damaging Winds

Damaging winds or "straight-line" winds, those exceeding 50-60 mph, pose a safety risk because they can blow objects around, cause damage to unstable structures, and knock down tree branches and power lines. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service suggests the following precautions:

Before

- pay attention to local weather forecasts
- secure or store away loose objects on and around your home

During

- immediately go inside a sturdy building and move to an interior room or basement
- move your car to a location away from trees and power lines
- if driving, hold the steering wheel with both hands, slow down, and keep a distance from larger vehicles

After

- report downed power lines to the police

For more information, visit [NOAA's website](#).

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. HELP IS ON THE WAY.

A Healthier Harlem River



DEP recently joined NYC Parks Commissioner **Mitchell J. Silver**, City Council Member **Vanessa Gibson**, students and staff from P.S. 42, and community members in the South Bronx to [cut the ribbon on the reconstruction of Little Claremont Playground](#), a Community Parks Initiative (CPI) site. The new and improved playground was funded with \$3.7 million from **Mayor Bill de Blasio** and DEP. The green infrastructure at this park, including newly installed rain gardens, permeable pavement, and synthetic turf field, will help to reduce stormwater runoff by 1.5 million gallons annually, improve the health of the Bronx Kill and Harlem River, and beautify the neighborhood. DEP has committed approximately \$50 million in funding for the construction of green infrastructure installations at CPI sites citywide.

Welcome Aboard!



Last Wednesday, 38 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott** (not pictured). They were joined by Newtown Creek Plant Chief **Zainool Ali**, Deputy Plant Chief **Christopher Carlson**, and Facility Manager **Hayman Lochan**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Anthony Agnello, Damien Apergis, Adam T. Auld, Paul V. Barone, Archibald R. Bennett, John D. Braswell, Demetri Chati, Peter N. Delre, Luca R. Demattia, Willy Dorvi, Stephen Douglass, Richard A. Dufresne III, Anthony J. Fedele, Michael T. Franklin, Alston L. Harrison, Robert W. Hazen, Robert H. Hill, John C. Isabella, Erik J. Killen, Yevgeny E. Kotlyar, Jesse C. Lopez, Jason F. McComb, Michael Medina, Douglas H. Miller, Kevin E. Novak, Andriy Pleskanka, Kevin S. Roberts, Vinod Singh, Daniel A. Suarez, Christopher D. Timoney, Francis A. Toohey, Dominick Turitto, Jr., Albert J. Vetter, Derrick G. Wedderburn, Robert M. Wise, Kenneth W. Wolf, Wael K. Zaki, and Michael A. Zambino with BWT.

Celebrations Highlight Cultural Events



Participants learn how to make origami during the Lunar New Year Festival.

The Office of EEO & Diversity, in collaboration with the Diversity Committee, celebrated two cultural events last month at Lefrak Headquarters—a Lunar New Year Celebration on Feb. 13 and the annual Black History Month soiree on Feb. 22. The Lunar New Year festival is commonly referred to as the Spring Festival in China, but is also celebrated in many other countries, including Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, and the Philippines. Each Lunar New Year celebrates one of 12 animals from the Chinese Zodiac, and 2019 is the year of the pig. The event consisted of a variety of activities such as arts and crafts workshops in which employees created origami figures, decorative candles, red lanterns, and learning the significance of jade stone and omamori amulets. The Black History Month soiree highlighted Black/African American culture through a ‘spoken word’ recital, a photo exhibit of note-worthy African Americans who encapsulate the essence of their time, and a live African dance presentation. Thank you to our guests and volunteers who participated in these events.



Attendees of the Black History Month soiree celebrated with an African dance.



This month, DEP is celebrating our value of integrity. If you know someone who embodies this value, please send an email by March 19th to values@dep.nyc.gov, and include the name of who you are nominating, their bureau, and a brief description of how they embody this value.

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