

## BWS Workshop is All in Good Taste

**A**s you all know, New York City has great tasting drinking water. Not only is this the sentiment of New Yorkers, but it is also supported by the fact that people in Florida are trying to replicate it! [↗](#)

Responsible for protecting this invaluable asset is the Bureau of Water Supply, which delivers one billion gallons of high quality and great tasting water to nine million New Yorkers each day. To achieve this goal, the Directorate of Water Quality, led by Director Steve Schindler, carefully monitors the water supply from watershed streams, to reservoirs, to aqueducts and throughout the city's entire drinking water distribution system.

As part of this mission, DEP convened a Taste and Odor



Workshop on September 17 at West Point—organized by Watershed Water Quality Science & Research Chief Dr. Lorraine Janus and co-sponsored with the Water Research Foundation (WRF) [↗](#)—to share knowledge and experience with other water supplies and expert scientists. The WRF is the only U.S.-based not-for-

(Continued on reverse side)

## Spotlight on Safety

### Drive Safely, Not Distracted

Texting while driving includes writing, sending, or reading text messages, email, or using the internet on a mobile device while operating any motor vehicle. Of course, distracted driving is not a new issue, but the increasing prevalence of work related in-vehicle technologies have increased driver temptations. Each year, cell phone distractions cause 600,000 crashes, 330,000 injuries and 3,000 deaths, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation

The Departments of Labor and Transportation are joining forces with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in a campaign to stop distracted

driving. By prohibiting texting while driving, OSHA is working to ensure that workers are safe on the road and that they return home safely at the end of their shift. Since DEP has thousands of employees who regularly do field work, with varying shifts, this is an important message to get out to those employees who spend a large portion of their time driving to and from different locations to perform critical work for the agency.

So be careful on the road, and remember it is a very real hazard to text while driving. Click here [↗](#) for Tips for Avoiding Distracted Driving Accidents.

## Commissioner's Corner

The Green Infrastructure Plan announced by **Mayor Bloomberg** on September 28 commits \$1.5 billion over the next 20 years to add “green” elements—enhanced tree pits, bioswales, and the like—to public infrastructure projects throughout the five boroughs. The goal of the plan is ambitious: to capture rainfall on 10% of the currently impervious surfaces in the city's 13 combined sewer drainage areas. You can learn more about the specifics here [↗](#), and read a recent op-ed summarizing the benefits of the plan here [↗](#).

The Green Infrastructure plan looks great on paper, but making it a reality will require strong, sustained partnerships with many City agencies and offices, including the Departments of Transportation, Parks, Design and Construction, Education, City Planning, the New York City Housing Authority, the Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability, the Office of Management and Budget, and more. We already work with these agencies all the time, but making green infrastructure a regular part of the cityscape will require systematic coordination of our capital planning efforts and a willingness to adapt and innovate as we begin to make the city more permeable.

The effort got a major boost last week when Deputy Mayor **Stephen Goldsmith** kicked off the inaugural meeting of the Green Infrastructure Task Force, composed of the City stakeholders who will work with DEP to implement the Green Infrastructure Plan. In addition to agency coordination, Deputy Mayor Goldsmith stressed the need to engage local community groups in the effort to green neighborhoods. Because it will require hundreds of installations in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs, the Green Infrastructure Plan is a unique opportunity to engage local stakeholders in the planning process; we'll need strong community support to ensure that green infrastructure



remains effective—and green—over the long term.

On the water supply side, last week, Deputy Commissioner **Paul Rush** headed the City's delegation at meeting with representatives from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware in Parsippany, New Jersey. The Delaware River watershed is a critical part of the city's water supply, which also supports these three states. They, along with the State of New York, are parties to the historic 1954 Supreme Court Decree [↗](#) that is the foundation of the partnership established to conserve and maintain the Delaware River basin. Water releases from the city's Delaware watershed reservoirs not only provide drinking water, but also contribute to economic growth from the Catskills to Delaware Bay. While the City must carefully monitor releases with an eye toward meeting New Yorkers everyday needs, our Bureau of Water Supply is pioneering an Operations Support Tool (OST) that will dramatically enhance our ability to predict weather, runoff and snow pack levels. The OST project is managed by Watershed Monitoring Deputy Chief **Jim Porter**, and will help us to decide how much water needs to be stored and when it is safe to release it. Read a Philadelphia Inquirer article about this complex issue here [↗](#).

Finally, please remember to contribute to the Thanksgiving Holiday Food Drive. Last year DEP collected 1,328 pounds. Let's do even better this holiday season!

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. [↗](#)

## Focus on the Field



You can sometimes tell a lot about someone by the shoes one wears, but that might be a little trickier with Ecological Services Deputy Director **Helen Forgiione** in the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis. Helen says that she keeps a pair of “rubber knee boots, dress shoes, and steel-toe work boots” in a corner of her office, “and I’m likely to wear any of them at any time on any given day.”

Helen supervises staff in the management of environmental restoration projects, and having this variety of footwear on hand, she is ready to respond to any assignment.

Helen began working for DEP in 1993 in the Bureau of Water Supply in Valhalla and as the Supervisor of Natural Resources, managed wetland, forestry, and fisheries research for the Bureau. Helen brings this focus on science to the restoration

projects in DEP’s in-city portfolio by monitoring the success of projects within Jamaica Bay and other NYC watersheds.

Helen does everything from wading in salt-marshes to measuring smooth cordgrass growth, to reviewing modeling for Environmental Impact Statements. Helen even managed the creation of a database that tracks over 30,000 individual plants used in city green restorations, and has assisted DEP in the largest land reclamation project in city history to date, the Penn-Fountain Landfills in Brooklyn.

Protecting New York City’s ecosystems pays a lot of environmental dividends: natural areas absorb stormwater and CO<sub>2</sub>, the city’s dense urban areas become cooler, and New York grows into a greener metropolis. From the recently announced Flushing Bay and Gowanus Canal green infrastructure grants, to the Alley Creek restoration in Bayside, DEP is continuously working to restore and expand the city’s natural areas and promote green infrastructure wherever possible.

Helen has a B.S. in biology from the University of Connecticut, and a M.S. in ecology and evolutionary biology from Rutgers University. When she’s not in the office or the field, Helen spends quality time with her husband and two young sons.

## Milestones

Congratulations to the following employees for 30 years of service: **Rosie DeJesus**, BWT; **Craig Rosenberg**, BWS; and **Edna Pennie**, BEC.

Best wishes to **Lisa Gonzalez**, BHRA, and her husband **Edgardo** on the birth of their son **Edgardo Andres** on October 28, 2010. All are doing well.

### DEP Thanksgiving Holiday Food Drive

DEP is once again holding the Thanksgiving Holiday Food Drive. Please take the opportunity to donate items at the cafeteria on the third floor starting November 3 until November 17. Your generosity can make a big difference in someone’s life. For more information on the food drive, please click here [🔗](#).

## Kudos Corner

DEP Records and Archives Management received a \$69,279. grant from the NY State Archives to begin work on new Records Retention Schedules for the agency. Last year they received a \$65,701 grant to start the work and completed a high-level Business Process Analysis of DEP and a Pilot Records Retention Schedule for the Land Acquisition unit. DEP has received grants in six of the last nine grant cycles with four grants being awarded to the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment to inventory and store legacy records. Good job DEP!

(BWS Workshop is All in Good Taste... continued)

profit research foundation devoted solely to drinking water.

Deputy Commissioner **Paul Rush** provided a welcoming address to the water scientists and experts in attendance, including the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the Philadelphia Water Department, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and representatives from UNC-Chapel Hill, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Fordham University and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. The workshop provided a forum to discuss topics, such as the causes of taste and odors in drinking water, the early warning and management of taste and odor events, the improvement of monitoring and surveillance techniques. Also there was a session on the ecology, bio-chemistry, and sensory aspects of algal problems that can contribute to drinking water taste issues were held.

Many drinking water taste issues are ultimately related to the quality of source waters. Runoff of nutrients into watershed streams and reservoirs can lead to the growth of algae

in reservoirs, which, when used as a source of drinking water, can sometimes cause disagreeable odors and flavors in the water. Such algae-caused odors can range from musty to medicinal and metallic depending on the species of algae. Although these taste issues may make the water less palatable, the water is usually still safe to drink.

DEP’s watershed protection programs have significantly reduced the amount of nutrients entering water supply reservoirs; seasonal algal blooms, once common to some West-of-Hudson reservoirs, are now seldom seen. If algal blooms do occur, they are quickly identified through an extensive water quality monitoring program. Water supply system operators can then select and deliver water from reservoirs with the highest quality water or even adjust water treatment systems to control some taste issues. This strategy of source protection, coupled with surveillance monitoring and operational flexibility, allows DEP to continuously deliver high quality, great tasting water to city consumers.

## Did You Know?

... the ability to detect “off” flavors in water, such as a metallic taste caused by minute amounts of microscopic algae from source water reservoirs, varies widely among people. Some people cannot taste anything at all, a condition called agusia. A large portion of the public, known as “super-tasters,” can detect even trace “off” flavors in drinking water. Such variability in people’s ability to detect “off” flavors makes managing for and delivering great tasting drinking water to New Yorkers a challenging job.

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov). [🔗](#)**