



**Environmental
Protection**

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY

PIPELINE

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Employee Recognition Day



Last week, DEP held its 29th Annual Employee Recognition Day ceremony at DC 37 headquarters in lower Manhattan. More than 750 employees were recognized, including more than 500 for their service longevity

and nearly 250 for perfect attendance. **Lillye Davenport** of the Bureau of Customer Services performed a stirring rendition of the national anthem. Congratulations to all those who participated! Click [here](#) to see more photos.

Spotlight on Safety

Safe Driving in School Zones

With the end of daylight savings time, the sun is setting earlier in the day and driving conditions can be more difficult. In addition, the city's roadways and sidewalks are filled with children walking to and from school. For those who drive to work, or use a DEP vehicle as part of their day-to-day responsibilities, some helpful tips to help keep everyone safe include:

- Observe the posted speed limit in school zones.
- Be on the alert for children.
- Stop for a school bus with flashing yellow lights or stop

sign engaged. Do not proceed until the school bus resumes motion, or the bus driver gives the OK to proceed.

- Avoid double parking as this blocks the visibility of pedestrians and other motorists, and be extra careful when bypassing a double parked vehicle.
- The idling of a motor vehicle, other than a legally authorized emergency vehicle, for more than one minute in the vicinity of a school is prohibited.

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.

Commissioner's Corner



In 2012, DEP responded to more than 3,000 reported water leaks, of which 77 percent were discovered to be private service line problems. Property owners in New York City are responsible for maintaining their water and sewer service lines, which are buried underground and run from the building to the City-owned mains under the street. On average, it can cost homeowners in the City between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to repair a water line break and as much as \$15,000 to repair a sewer line break.

In January, DEP partnered with American Water Resources (AWR) to introduce a Service Line Protection program to help eligible homeowners safeguard themselves against the high cost of unexpected service line breaks. Last week, I joined AWR President **Malcolm Conner** and Brooklyn homeowner **Ronald Robins**—who recently had a service line break that was covered by the program—to announce that more than 100,000 property owners in New York City have signed up for the service. So far, the Service Line Protection Program has saved enrolled customers more than \$7 million in repair charges that would have otherwise been paid out of pocket. AWR has performed more than 2,000 repairs across the five boroughs and more than 95 percent of customers surveyed are very satisfied with the service. Click [here](#) to see photos of the repair to Mr. Robins' service line.

DEP customers are eligible to participate if they have a single service line of two inches or less, which describes approximately 670,000 accounts, and protection starts 30-days after enrollment. The current costs of the Service Line Protection Program are \$4.49 per month to protect the water line and \$7.99 per month for the sewer line. Customers who join the program can choose to protect their water line, sewer line, or both. They may also discontinue the programs at any time if they no longer wish to participate.

Since the Program launched in January, 101,458 homeowners have signed up, with the highest enrollment in Queens, followed by Brooklyn, Staten Island, and the Bronx. The Service Line Protection Program has received enormous support from community leaders and elected officials. It provides unlimited protection for covered repairs and basic restoration of the property. It also provides for an unlimited number of claims, 24/7 customer service, and a quick response by licensed master plumbers. There are also no claim forms to submit, no deductibles, and the monthly program fee is included on a participating customer's regular DEP water and sewer bill. At no cost to the City and at an affordable cost to the customer, AWR fully manages the Protection Program—from educating homeowners about their responsibility to maintain their water and sewer service lines, to establishing a network of local, independent contractors and providing 24-hour customer service.

Establishing a Service Line Protection Program is a key component of DEP's *Strategy 2011-2014*, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to help make it the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation. To learn more about the Service Line Protection Program click [here](#).

Focus on the Field



In order to protect public health and the environment in New York City, DEP is always looking to recruit talented individuals to join the department. But recognizing the ability of those that already work here, and giving them the opportunity to grow professionally and help DEP become the best water utility in the nation is no less important. Principal Administrative Associate **Kerry-Ann Russell** is a terrific example of just this.

Born in Jamaica, Russell came to the United States with her family when she was two years old, where they settled in Queens. During high school, she began working at DEP as a Coop student and she assisted the office manager for what is now the Bureau of Public Affairs. Two years later, she came on board full-time as the Assistant to the Director of Public Affairs, and she also handled procurement responsibilities for the bureau. In 2009, she moved to the governmental affairs side of the bureau where she helped to resolve and respond to requests from residents and elected officials, while still keeping up with the entire bureau's procurement needs.

A year ago, when seven bureau offices and three mayoral satellite offices were consolidated, Russell was selected as the Budget/

Procurement liaison for the newly formed Executive Administration Office. Working with the Commissioner's office, the bureaus of Legal and Public Affairs, and the Energy Office, among others, and with a combined budget of more than \$30 million, this was certainly a new challenge for Russell, but one she was prepared for and happy to accept.

"Different bureaus have different needs, and every day presents a new challenge, but that's also what makes the job exciting and fulfilling," said Russell. "I really enjoy working with **Frankie Camardella** and **Grace White** and I'm grateful for the opportunity they gave me."

Russell's efforts have improved the efficiency of several of the Office's internal processes. One recent accomplishment involved analyzing procurements and combining similar purchases into larger orders. This cut costs because the higher volume allowed the Office to secure a lower price per unit. Russell continues to keep close ties to the Bureau of Public Affairs and assists them with their community outreach programs, including Water-On-the-Go and Rain Barrel giveaways.

"Kerry-Ann is a talented employee and she handles her assignments with professionalism and provides her customers with outstanding service, ensuring that all deadlines are met," said Frankie Camardella, Director of the Office of Executive Administration.

Outside of the office, family—including her husband and two children—comes first for Russell. Cooking is a close second though, and she is looking forward to preparing a smoked turkey, lasagna, and collard greens, among other dishes, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Press Box

'GREASE' IS THE WORD: "In an effort to educate New Yorkers about the problem, DEP launched an outreach pilot program. They are handing out information and tools for getting rid of grease properly. DEP has also partnered with the nonprofit Center for Employment Opportunity to help spread their message. The program runs through the spring, and the DEP says it's just one more tool they have that's helping improve the city's sewers."

View the entire NY1 story [here](#)

Timberrrrrrrrrrrr!



Roughly 3,370 trees spread across 49 acres around Kensico Reservoir in Westchester County were toppled or damaged by Hurricane Sandy and, last week, DEP completed removing them from the largest of four sites. Click [here](#) to see more photos, and [here](#) for more information.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 8 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Lolita Jackson, **Benjamin Jones**, and **Peter Kontogiannis** with BEDC; **Katherine Glass** with BEPA; **Megan Houston** with BLA; **Timothy Robinson** with ACCO; **Latoya Valentine** with BCS; and **Miles Webster** with BWSO.

NAUGHTY OR NICE, EVERYONE ON YOUR LIST DESERVES SOMETHING DEP.

We are getting ready to reopen, just in time for the holiday gifting season. Stay tuned to Pipeline for details.



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