

Commissioner's Corner



I recently joined with FDNY firefighters from Battalion 13/Engine Co. 93/Ladder Co. 45 in Washington Heights to celebrate the [10th Anniversary of the Hydrant Education Action Team \(HEAT\)](#)

[program](#), a fire hydrant abuse prevention campaign. HEAT deploys teams of teens hired through the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Summer Youth Employ-

ment program to inform New Yorkers about the dangers of illegally opening fire hydrants. Illegally opened fire hydrants release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute and can reduce water pressure in neighborhoods making it difficult to fight fires.

After 10 years of successful HEAT outreach, reports of illegally opened hydrants have fallen by more than 60 percent. Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap, which releases only 20 to 25 gallons per minute, ensuring adequate water pressure and reducing the risk that a child could be knocked over and injured by the force of the water. Spray caps can be obtained by an adult 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses.



Over the past decade we have had tremendous success spreading the message about the dangers of illegally opened fire hydrants through our partnership with communities in northern Manhattan and the Bronx. I'd like to thank Fire Commissioner **Daniel A. Nigro**, Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner **Bill Chong** and SoBRO HEAT Coordinator **Sandy Ramirez** for the continued support their agencies provide to the HEAT program. I'd also like to recognize the Bureau of Community Affairs for their effective outreach efforts. By reminding people that there is a safe and legal way to use hydrants to cool off during the hot summer months, the young New Yorkers who participate in the HEAT program are continuing to help keep their neighbors and our first responders safe.

The [HEAT program](#) is run in partnership with the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO) and deploys four teams of 10–12 young adults who distribute literature, posters, and other informational materials about fire hydrant safety at community events, parades, greenmarkets, churches, and libraries. The outreach campaign focuses on neighborhoods in northern Manhattan and the Bronx that have historically seen high rates of unauthorized fire hydrant use during heat waves. In addition to literature, the teams distribute reusable water bottles and other souvenirs that promote the safe operation of fire hydrants.

Spotlight on Safety

Protection From Ultraviolet (UV) Rays

Employees who work primarily in the field are at a greater risk of exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays, which cause sunburn and increase the risk of skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans! Sunlight exposure is highest during the summer and between 10:00am and 4:00pm. UV rays are also present when it is cloudy out.

To protect yourself from UV exposure:

- use sunscreen with a minimum of SPF 15 that protects against UVA and UVB rays
- apply liberally at least 20 minutes before sun exposure

- pay special attention to covering the ears, scalp, lips, neck, and backs of hands
- reapply sunscreen as directed on the bottle, especially after heavy perspiration
- wear a hard hat or wide-brimmed hat and/or UV protective eyewear

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration also recommends wearing tightly woven clothing that blocks out light. As a test, place your hand between a single layer of the clothing and a light source. If you can see your hand through the fabric, the garment offers little protection.

To learn more about UV protection visit the [CDC's Workplace Safety & Health Topics: UV Radiation](#).

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.



Museum Hosts Toast to NYC Water



Kim Estes-Fradis, Director of Education, BPAC, and **Adam Bosch**, Director of Public Affairs, BWS, recently joined staff from the Children's Museum of Manhattan to raise a fluted glass of delicious tap water and toast the 100th anniversary of water flowing from the Catskills watershed to all five boroughs. The special event was held at the "Dynamic H2O" water exhibit featured in the museum's Susman Environmental Center. Participating children were given a NYC Water Saver's Workbook and a Junior Drip Patrol badge. The highlight of the 800-square-foot, three-level exhibit is a 16-foot interactive water table that helps children understand how gravity and pumps are essential in providing water to houses and skyscrapers across the city. An additional playspace allows kids to create waterfalls, build dams and pretend to fish. Another feature lets youngsters trace the path of New York City's world-class drinking water as it travels 100 miles downhill from Ashokan Reservoir upstate to Hillview Reservoir in Yonkers. Support for the installation was provided by DEP and the Catskill Watershed Corporation. The museum is located at 212 West 83rd Street, New York, NY 10024.

Green Playground Groundbreaking



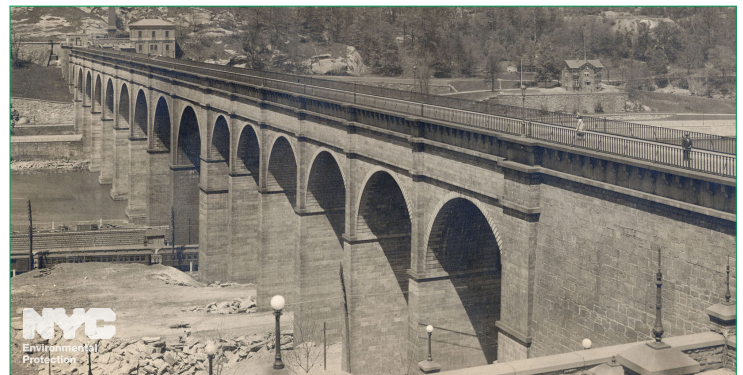
Acting Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** joined today with Queens Borough President **Melinda Katz**, Council Member **Peter Koo**, and the Trust for Public Land to break ground on a project that will transform the asphalt schoolyard at JHS 189Q in Flushing, Queens, into a state-of-the-art green playground for the whole community. The \$1 million playground was designed by the students and is expected to be completed by Summer 2018. The playground will be able to manage up to 360,000 gallons of rainwater annually and will include green infrastructure elements, such as specialized plantings and shade trees, porous pavement and permeable pavers. Also included is a new synthetic turf field of woven polyester filaments and a broken stone storage layer and perforated distribution pipes to promote infiltration. Such green infrastructure design elements are a hallmark of The Trust for Public Land's playground work. These features reduce storm runoff that can flood streets and overwhelm sewer systems, allowing untreated water to end up in rivers and bays.

Rain Barrel Giveaway in the Bronx



DEP joined with Council Member **Andy King** on Saturday to distribute rain barrels to approximately [100 Bronx homeowners](#) from the Wakefield, Olinville, Edenwald, Eastchester, Williamsbridge, Baychester, and Co-op City neighborhoods. The 60-gallon rain barrels connect directly to a property owner's downspout and the collected stormwater can be used to water lawns and gardens. Rain barrels can help reduce a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months. They also help to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the City's sewer system, which helps to protect the health of local waterways, including the Bronx River and the Hutchinson River. Saturday's event was held during the 5th Annual 12th Council District Community Engagement Day, in partnership with Fun In the Sun NYC, on the football field of Evander Childs Educational Complex in Williamsbridge and the rain barrels were provided free of charge.

Exhibit Offers Infrastructure Insight



The New-York Historical Society Museum and Library currently has an exhibit titled "[Objects Tell Stories](#)," which showcases themed displays devoted to a variety of topics, including infrastructure. Visitors can learn about High Bridge and the [Old Croton Aqueduct](#), which last month marked the 175th anniversary of its activation. The installation features a silver-plated replica of the [High Bridge Water Tower](#) and a wooden water main. Assisting with the exhibit interpretation and an accompanying video were **Kim Estes-Fradis**, Director of Education, BPAC, **Mike Farnan**, Director of Distribution Operations, BWSO, and **Samar Qandil**, Director of Records and Archives Management, OIT. The museum is located at 170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024.

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