

Bronx Nets Win Over Trash



The 23-mile long Bronx River winds through lower Westchester and the Bronx and is a peaceful corridor of green where New Yorkers can fish, boat, and observe nature just steps from the noise and bustle of urban life. It eventually empties into the Upper East River between the Soundview and Hunts Points neighborhoods. In an effort to further improve the cleanliness of the waterway, last week the department announced that the \$26 million installation of litter control devices at four sewer outfalls will capture trash and debris before it can enter the river.

Much of the trash and debris found in the Bronx River, and New York Harbor in general, originated as litter discarded on city streets that was subsequently washed into the sewer system. To help keep the litter from reaching the Bronx River, as part of a pilot program below-ground control devices have been installed over the last 18 months in the south Bronx. The control devices use hydraulic bar screens and nylon netting systems to capture the litter, the first time this type of technology is being used in New York City.

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Spotlight on Safety

Petroleum Spill Prevention

If spilled, petroleum and industrial chemicals can migrate through soil and rock and can contaminate groundwater. This makes cleaning up a spill difficult. A spill can also create a fire or explosion risk or result in the release of odors or fumes that can affect workers (causing drowsiness and nausea if inhaled), the environment, and the public.

To help prevent spills follow these simple guidelines:

- When filling a tank ensure that the volume available in the tank is greater than the volume of product to be transferred.
- Constantly monitor the transfer operation to prevent overfilling and spilling.
- Investigate, report, and clean up any spills and overfills in accordance with regulations.

Visit DEC's website [for additional information.](#)

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

Last Thursday **Mayor Bloomberg** delivered his twelfth and final State of the City Address at the new Barclays Center in Brooklyn. I was fortunate enough to be in the audience as the Mayor laid out an ambitious agenda for his final year in office. BWT's **Ravi Basant** was also in attendance and had one of the best seats in the house; he was one of 16 City employees selected to sit on stage alongside the Mayor in recognition of their outstanding acts of service during the response to Hurricane Sandy. Ravi—a Facility Manager who oversees the Rockaway Wastewater Treatment Plant—worked nearly 60 hours over a three day period to help bring the Rockaway Plant back online after it was damaged by Sandy's unprecedented storm surge. So many DEP employees acted heroically during and after Sandy, and Ravi did a great job representing his colleagues in BWT and DEP as a whole.

The Mayor's speech made it clear that investing in our infrastructure and protecting the environment are among the top priorities to ensure the City's future. One of the projects the Mayor highlighted in his remarks is the completion of the second stage of City Water Tunnel No. 3. Stage 1 of the tunnel, which runs from the Western Bronx through northern Manhattan and Roosevelt Island, was put into service in 1998. Since the Mayor took office in 2002, DEP has committed \$4.5 billion to the construction of City Water Tunnel No. 3—more funding than the previous five administrations combined. Stage 2 of the tunnel—which will complete construction in Manhattan—will be placed into service this fall and will mark the first time in 15 years that a segment of the tunnel has been activated. Completion of stage 2 will mark a significant milestone and increase service reliability in Manhattan which relies on Tunnel No. 1.



Photo credit: Edward Reed

Ultimately, completion of the entire tunnel will allow for the inspection and repair of Tunnels 1 and 2 for the first time since they were put into service in 1917 and 1936 respectively.

Another important sustainability goal the Mayor outlined in his address is doubling the city's recycling rate to 30 percent by 2017. One of the many initiatives the Mayor spoke about is a program to begin recycling food waste, which can be used as fertilizer or converted to energy, and DEP plays a key role in this program. Next month, in partnership with the Sanitation Department and Waste Management, DEP will begin a pilot program to convert up to 60 tons of food waste from schools, green markets and fire houses each week into methane gas by injecting processed food waste into the digester eggs at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. Processing food waste in the digester eggs will take material that would have otherwise been trucked to landfills and convert it into a gas which will be used to heat the plant. In the future, digester gas could be used to make renewable natural gas or even electricity.

While these are just a couple examples of the Mayor's ambitious plan for 2013, one thing is clear: there is a lot to do and we should all make every day count.

Focus on the Field

When the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) is faced with a complex maintenance situation, **Jeffrey Schneider** is one person they look to for help in solving the problem. As an Associate Project Manager for BWT's Requirement Contract Services Section (RCSS), Schneider manages all aspects of several maintenance and repair contracts including writing specifications, pre-bid and bidding processes, evaluating contractors, coordinating with EH&S staff, communicating and working with other City agencies, and evaluating contractors on their performance. He supports work at all 14 wastewater treatment plants, ensuring that contractual maintenance and repairs are done on time and up to specifications.

Schneider has been part of the DEP family for 22 years, starting as a Process Engineer and also working in the Project Development Section on plant upgrades. This experience has helped him find answers when others are ready to throw in the towel. "When I hear someone say it can't be done, I start thinking of a way to get it done," said Schneider.

As an expert in dealing with contractors and making sure that their work is completed on time, Schneider was critical in ensuring that the elevators at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant digester eggs were ready to accommodate the more than 200 visitors scheduled to tour the plant on Valentine's Day.

"I sat down with the elevator contractor and the Newtown



Creek Plant staff to formulate a plan of action together," said Schneider. "With a short time frame in which to complete repairs it was an intense few days, but we were successful in large part due to the talented staff at the Newtown Creek Plant who were ready to assist in any way to get the job done," he added.

In addition to the 14 wastewater treatment plants, Schneider and his colleagues in the RCSS also offer maintenance support to the 3 CSO retention tanks and about 90 pumping stations to keep their equipment in service and in a state of good repair.

"Jeff has a knack for persuading our contractors that the DEP repair job is their top priority," said BWT Deputy Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza**.

Schneider has a bachelor's degree in civil and environmental engineering from Clarkson University in Potsdam, NY. When he's not solving problems for DEP, he enjoys spending time with his wife and two daughters, volunteering, playing the drums, and fishing.

Kudos Corner



The Second Annual Valentine's Day Tours at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant were an overwhelming success. The two tours that were originally scheduled quickly reached capacity so a third tour was squeezed in at the last minute. Overall, more than 200 visitors as well as numerous members of the press came out to learn about the wastewater treatment process and see the view from the top of the

digester eggs. Many thanks to the BWT and BCIA staff who made this event happen.

Volunteer Opportunity

Parts of the Staten Island Bluebelt were heavily littered with debris in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. We invite you to join us on Saturday, February 23rd to help restore these vital wetlands to their natural beauty. Volunteers will help collect trash and other light debris washed into the Bluebelt by the storm surge. The event will take place from 9:30am to 1:00pm in the Midland Beach area of Staten Island. Transportation from Lefrak will be available but limited to the first ten employees who RSVP.

To volunteer, please email DEPVolunteerDay@dep.nyc.gov. Thank you in advance!

(Bronx Nets Win Over Trash... continued)



The nylon netting system has a lower installation cost but requires periodic manual cleaning. The hydraulic bar screens are more costly to install but are self-cleaning and direct the trapped debris to a wastewater treatment plant where it is removed. The installation of the two netting systems was completed in late 2011 and thus far more than 10 tons of trash and

debris has been removed from the nets. The performance of both methods is being monitored closely and will inform decisions about future deployment of the litter control devices. Later this year, as part of the rehabilitation and augmentation of the Gowanus Flushing Tunnel, a similar facility will be completed at the head of the Gowanus Canal.

Press Box

WASTEWATER PLANT TOURS FLUSH WITH VALENTINE'S DAY VISITORS: New Yorkers seeking an alternative Valentine's Day experience flocked to Brooklyn's Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on Thursday, as experts from the Department of Environmental Protection gave tours of the city facility, which treats more than 300 million gallons of wastewater a day. See the NY1 video here: [NY1 video](#)

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