

## Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



**Pam Elardo**  
Deputy Commissioner  
Wastewater Treatment

Over the last couple of years, DEP has been engaged in international endeavors with leading global cities. Most recently, **Commissioner Sapienza** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Waternet, the regional water and wastewater utility for greater Amsterdam, to build cooperation and knowledge sharing with respect to innovation in resiliency and resource recovery between our two agencies.

Last month, we had the pleasure of hosting two delegates

from Waternet here at DEP for a two-day Workshop on Resource Recovery, where we engaged in rich discussions around integration of new technologies, capital planning, and staff development. Over the course of the discussions, it became clear that in addition to sharing common climate goals and the vision of resource recovery facilities or “factories,” we also face similar challenges. Aging infrastructure, limited footprint, and nutrient loading limitations are just a few.

During the coming months, we will be tailoring a Research Collaboration Plan by prioritizing focus areas identified during the workshop for further collabora-



tion across our organizations, and leveraging funding from both the U.S. and the Netherlands. Later this year, we will be sharing the experiences of this collaboration in a panel at the Amsterdam International Water Week along with Waternet and other leading utilities from around the world.

We continue our commitment to being catalysts of innovation and becoming a leader in resource recovery initiatives in New York City. To be successful, we are developing thoughtful leadership strategies with our international and academic partners, and engaging with DEP staff at all levels, to participate in ad-

vancing the implementation of innovative practices.

Many thanks to the organizers of the Workshop on Resource Recovery, **Ariane Brotto** from the DEP Energy Office and **Alan Cohn** from BEPA, as well as our partners from Waternet, **André Struker** and **Ben de Ru**. Thank you to everyone involved in making this a valuable experience for DEP and Waternet alike, including **Jane Gajwani** and **Jennifer McDonnell** from the DEP Energy Office, **Dimitri Katehis** from BWT R&D Program, and BWT Plant Operations team.

## *Spotlight on Safety*

### Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Distracted Driving Awareness Month, observed in April, is a united effort to recognize the dangers of and eliminate preventable deaths from distracted driving. According to the National Safety Council (NSC), every day at least nine Americans die and 100 are injured in distracted driving crashes. Cell phones, dashboard touchscreens, voice commands, and other in-vehicle technologies all contribute to distracted driving. NSC uses their “Just Drive” campaign as part of their efforts to combat distracted driving. You can combat distracted driving by following these tips:

- never use a cell phone while driving

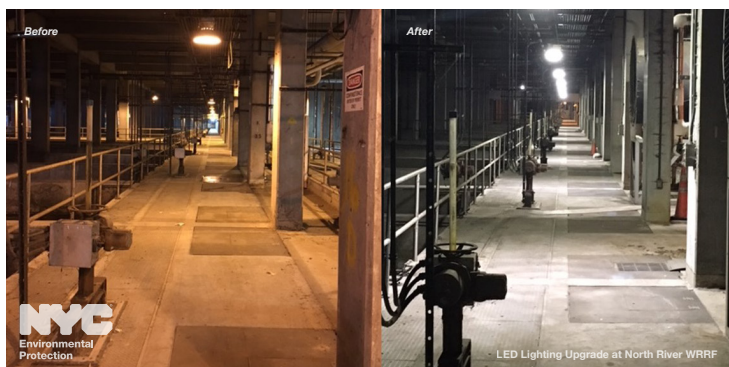
- silence cell phones and keep them out of sight
- speak up if you are a passenger in a vehicle with a driver using a cell phone and ask them to stop
- pull over to a safe area if you need to use a cell phone
- prepare any in-vehicle technologies, such as GPS, before you begin driving
- keep your eyes on the road, hands on the wheel and just drive

For more information on Distracted Driving Awareness Month, visit the [NSC 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.



## Reducing DEP's Carbon Footprint



The DEP Office of Energy and Resource Recovery Programs (Energy Office) works closely with the DCAS Division of Energy Management (DEM) to fund energy efficiency capital and expense projects that support our ambitious energy and carbon neutrality goals. These projects are identified, managed, and implemented by DEP across our Bureaus and funded through the One City Built to Last competitive funding programs. Since FY15, we have been awarded more than \$102 million for the Capital Improvement Plan through the Accelerated Conservation and Efficiency Program. North River Cogeneration and Electrification, and Cannonsville Hydroelectric Plant are among the awarded projects. Similarly, we coordinate funds for expense projects through the Expenses for Conservation and Efficiency Leadership (ExCEL) Program. More than \$4.3 million have been funded from FY14 to date to deliver LED lighting retrofits, HVAC upgrades, feasibility studies, and trainings. Altogether, the delivery of DCAS-funded projects provides a projected annual energy savings of 796,862 MMBtu and avoided GHG emissions of 43,385 MtCO<sub>2e</sub>, equivalent to 9,211 cars off the road or more than 5.5 billion smartphones charged a year.

The Energy Office is currently accepting proposals of expense projects for submission to the FY20 ExCEL Program with a deadline of April 26. If you have ideas or suggestions for energy efficiency projects within your bureau, or would like to learn more about the funding programs, please email [Jane Gajwani, JGajwani@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:Jane.Gajwani@dep.nyc.gov). You can also visit the DEM [website](#) for more information.

## DEP Attends Work Zone Safety Event



DEP joined DOT and DDC last Tuesday to highlight the City's participation in National Work Zone Awareness Week, observed this year from April 8–12. The Work Zone Safety event was held on the Brooklyn Bridge pedestrian path and stressed the importance of motorists' awareness of crews maintaining infrastructure on roads, bridges, sidewalks, and tunnels citywide. Representing DEP were **Fred Chyke-Okpuzor**, Director of Environmental Health & Safety for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, **Larron Win**, Chief of Health & Safety for BWSO, Operations Supervisor **Daniel Coffey**, and laborers **James Cosme**, and **Henry Icaza**.

## Increasing Organic Waste Recycling



DEP's Resource Recovery Program Manager **Jennifer McDonnell** joined City Council Member **Antonio Reynoso** at the Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board's community meeting this month, where a diverse group of organics recovery enthusiasts from around the region met to discuss ideas for how to increase participation in curbside bin and food scrap drop-off programs. The event also aimed to gain input from the community on other organics collection methods that could help increase collections, such as micro-haulers, InSinkErators, and "bring it" centers. An overview of the financial, environmental, and human costs of transporting and exporting our garbage was given during the event, along with information about the food scraps collection process, which often includes a stop at Newtown Creek for co-digestion. Councilman Reynoso cheered on the effort by pointing out that pursuing zero waste is saving lives at the macro level by addressing greenhouse gas production.

## Rain Barrels for Southeast Queens



DEP recently partnered with State Senator **Leroy Comrie**, Assembly Member **Alicia Hyndman**, and Council Member **I. Daneek Miller** to kick off the 2019 Rain Barrel Giveaway Program and distribute rain barrels to approximately 200 homeowners in Southeast Queens. The 60-gallon rain barrels are easy to install and connect directly to a property owner's downspout to capture and store the stormwater that falls on the rooftop. The water collected in the rain barrel can then be used to water lawns and gardens, or for other outdoor chores. 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 Jamaica Bay. Last year, DEP distributed approximately 8,300 rain barrels to New York City homeowners. The April 6 event was held at Roy Wilkins Park in St. Albans, and the rain barrels were provided free of charge. Thank you to BPAC staff who help organize and manage these events.

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