

## Commissioner's Corner

As we begin the second term of the de Blasio Administration, DEP remains dedicated to raising the bar on the excellent services we provide. With that in mind, the agency is developing a strategic plan so that we can set goals and measure our progress towards becoming the best water utility in the nation, while continuing to protect public health and the environment by supplying clean drinking water, collecting and treating wastewater, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous materials pollution for all

New Yorkers. Leading this effort will be no easy task and I have tapped **Diana Jones Ritter** to be the agency's Chief Strategy Officer, a new role in my executive cabinet where she will be reporting directly to me.

In this capacity, Diana will champion some of my highest priorities for the agency and provide advisory support, consultation, and input to strengthen the overall enterprise and its performance. She will work with agency leadership to push ahead on greater orga-



nizational effectiveness, including succession planning and change-management strategies to achieve our shared goals. Diana will also continue to lead recruitment of executive and senior staff vacancies. Over the past four years, Diana successfully led the implementation of workforce and business-process strategies to improve and expand DEP's talent management operations with the goal of being a "best-in-class" OD&HR organization. Diana's proven record of success in this realm and the overall experience she brings from more than three decades of leadership in public service will assure added value in her new role as Chief Strategy Officer.

There are several other new appointments I'd like to recognize as well:

- **Zoe Ann Campbell** (*not pictured*) has been promoted to Deputy Commissioner of Organizational Development and Human Resources, reporting directly to the Chief Administrative Officer. In this expanded role, Zoe Ann will continue to oversee Human Resources and will also manage the agency's organizational development and planning functions.
- In the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment, **Angela DeLillo** is the new Assistant Commissioner of Capital Planning & Delivery. Angela will oversee the bureau's annual OTPS budget of

\$268 million and several units including capital planning, engineering, in-house design, contracting, project management, construction management, procurement, and maintenance support.

- **Thomas Wynne** has been named the Executive Director of Engineering in the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations. In this new capacity, he will oversee the divisions of Capital Program Management and Water and Sewer Planning—Drainage Modeling. He will also oversee the Cross Connection and Green Infrastructure divisions.
- Another promotion within the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations is that of **Michael Farnan** as the newly-named Executive Director of Operations, overseeing the Division of Distribution Operations, Field Operations, Construction, and CMOM.
- **Aaron Feinstein** now holds the title of Executive Director of Labor Relations and Discipline, assuming an increased labor relations portfolio. He will take the lead in representing DEP in most of our collective bargaining and will supervise the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

I hope you will join me in wishing them well as they take on these new roles and responsibilities and work together to make DEP an even greater agency. Thank you.

## Spotlight on Safety

### 2017-2018 Seasonal Flu Update

This flu season has been particularly bad, with every state seeing widespread flu virus activity. While flu cases generally peak around Christmas and New Year's, cases and hospitalizations continue to rise. Seasonal influenza is a specific and serious respiratory virus, primarily spread through droplets that are released when infected people sneeze or cough, but can also be transmitted from touching affected surfaces. The flu can lead to complications such as pneumonia and can be life threatening especially among those who are very young, elderly, pregnant and with certain underlying health conditions. Typical symptoms include: high fever, aching muscles, sore throat, dry cough, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea.

The workplace can be a common place for germs to spread.

Practicing the following precautions to reduce the spread of flu in the workplace.

- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- get the flu vaccine if you haven't already
- if you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine

It takes about 2 weeks for the vaccine to kick in, so get your vaccination as soon as possible. As in past years, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not recommend the nasal spray vaccine, only injections.

For more information, visit the [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) websites.

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.

## Gilboa Fossil Donated to Local School



DEP on Friday [donated a fossil from the oldest fossilized forest in the world](#) to the Gilboa-Conesville Central School, which will use it to educate local children about the ancient forest that once occupied their town. The 385-million-year-old fossil is among the oldest tree fossils discovered in the history of the world. The remnants of those trees were first discovered in 1869 by Samuel Lockwood, a local Reformed Church minister and naturalist. In 1921, workers harvesting quarry stones for Gilboa Dam, which impounds the water for Schoharie Reservoir, found more stumps from the ancient trees. Several hundred sections of fossilized trees were found at three sites around the old village of Gilboa. Their size ranged from 12 inches to more than 3 feet in diameter. Dr. Winifred Goldring, who would become the nation's first female state paleontologist when she took the position in New York, named the *Eospermatoperis*. One of the quarries was excavated again in 2010 to prepare for the \$138 million rehabilitation of Gilboa Dam, allowing paleontologists to reexamine the prehistoric forest floor. More information can be found by visiting the [Gilboa Historical Society Museum](#), located at 122 Stryker Road in Gilboa.

## The Importance of Prevention

A note from **Kaitlyn Maceira**, LMHC, CASAC, with the NYC Employee Assistance Program (NYC EAP).

Everyone has heard the phrase, "You better nip that in the bud," but what does that actually mean? Well, it means to stop something before it starts; to prevent something from happening. Prevention is defined as the act of hindering or keeping something from occurring. When thinking of what to write about this month, the importance of prevention was brought to my attention. The importance of being able to identify a possible negative outcome and work within yourself or with the help of others to change it. Over the next several months, I will explore some new topics and

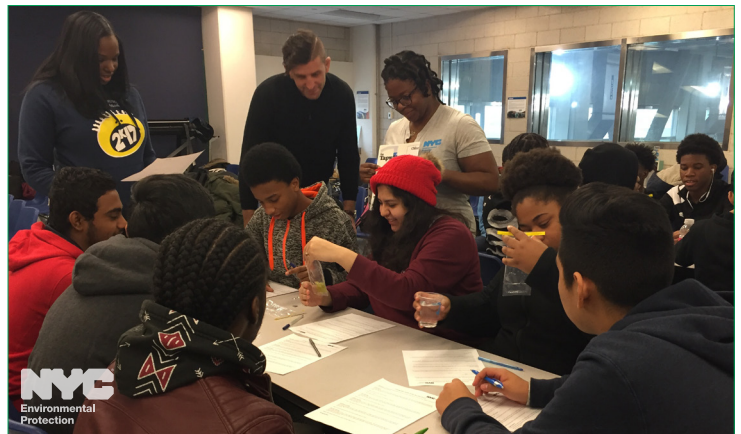
perhaps some that have already been written about, but this time with a focus on prevention. I will explore ways you can prevent leading an unhealthy lifestyle, as well as ways you can help a loved one prevent negative consequences of behavioral actions. I will go over prevention in how it pertains to physical health, mental health, and substance abuse along with other topics where prevention is attainable, helpful, and healthy. Should you or a loved one need prevention information, services, or support prior to the publication of these articles, free and confidential services are available through the NYC EAP. Contact us by phone at (212) 306-7660 or email at [eap@olr.nyc.gov](mailto:eap@olr.nyc.gov).

## Valentine's Day Tours



The Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant will once again be opened Feb. 10 to the public for special Valentine's Day tours. The tours, which are already sold-out, will include a short overview of the wastewater treatment process followed by a visit to the 120-foot high observation deck located atop the iconic digester eggs. There, visitors will enjoy scenic views of the New York City skyline. The tours will begin at the Visitors Center, which is located at 329 Greenpoint Avenue. The Newtown Creek plant is the City's largest wastewater treatment facility and serves approximately 1 million residents. It has been honored by The New York City Public Design Commission with two Awards for Excellence in Design.

## Student Scientists at Newtown Creek



Earlier this month, DEP hosted 9<sup>th</sup>- and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade AP Environmental Science students from George Westinghouse High School in Brooklyn at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. The field trip included a presentation about the city's wastewater treatment system, hands-on activities, and a tour of the state-of-the-art facility. Leading the group were **Latoya Anderson, Robin Sanchez, and Lakeisha Bradshaw** from BPAC's Education Team. An article highlighting the visit is featured in the [NY Teacher Newspaper](#) on the United Federation of Teachers' website.

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