

**Special Guest** *Commissioner's Corner*



**Jim Mueller**, DEP's Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction, is a guest commentator this week.

DEP's Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction (BEDC) is focused on delivering capital projects to the operating bureaus both on time, and on budget. This is particularly important

to the Bureau of Water Supply (BWS), who is responsible for providing approximately 1 billion gallons of high quality drinking water every single day to nearly half the population of New York State. As part of our continuing effort to plan and coordinate our work, last week I had the opportunity to take a two-day tour of BWS facilities in the watershed,

which included both ongoing and upcoming capital projects. Joining me were staff from BEDC, BWS and the Office of Information and Technology (OIT).

Over the course of two days we visited sites East and West of the Hudson River, including New Croton Dam, Amawalk Dam, the Hudson River Drainage Chamber, Port Jervis Wastewater Treatment Plant, Merriman Dam, the Water Supply Control Center, Boiceville Bridge and Gilboa Dam.

Our first stop was at the New Croton Dam. The dam serves as a key cog in our water supply system and has just undergone a \$13.4 million project that replaced gates and valves previously installed in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The new equipment includes three 6-foot-tall steel gates, which can be lifted and lowered to regulate water that flows below the dam, as well as 17 new valves that also help regulate flow.

On the second day of the tour we got an update on the ongoing work at Gilboa Dam and Schoharie Reservoir, where construction will continue until approximately 2020. This includes a permanent release tunnel that will give BWS



the ability to release water from Schoharie Reservoir around the Dam and into Schoharie Creek below. The remaining projects include site restoration, rehabilitation work on the Shandaken Tunnel Intake Chamber, and the construction of a public information kiosk off Route 990V.

Our commitment to delivering a reliable supply of high quality drinking water both today and for generations to come was on full display throughout our two-day tour. I thank you all for your continued hard work to protect public health and the environment.

*Spotlight on Safety*

**Safety Starts with Us**

OEHS will be hosting agency-wide Safety Day events on Thursday, October 26 at Lefrak and on Wednesday, November 1 at Valhalla from 10am to 3pm. Safety Day at Lefrak will include a keynote presentation from the Regional Administrator for OSHA Region 2, and at Valhalla it will include a presentation from the Compliance Assistance Specialist for the OSHA Tarrytown Area Office. Employees will have the opportunity to meet with

representatives from various organizations including FDNY, Con Ed, DC-37, PESH, COSH, the American Society of Safety Engineers and more. Scheduled events will also include an *Escape Room* challenge and free hearing tests, which employees will be able to sign up for prior to the event. Both Safety Days are open to all employees and they aim to bring awareness to the importance of safety, both in the workplace, and at home.

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.





## Monarchs Return to Rain Gardens



BWSO Gardeners have discovered monarch caterpillars and chrysalides for the second year in a row in Queens. This generation of monarchs is known as a “super generation,” as they live eight times longer than their parents and grandparents and travel 10 times farther in their lifetime. Since the mid-1990’s, the population of monarch butterflies has dropped significantly due to many factors, including severe weather events and a changing climate, the use of pesticides, invasive species and a rapidly shrinking habitat. DEP’s curbside rain gardens include hardy plants to help soak up stormwater before it can enter the sewer system and contribute to overflows into local waterways. Milkweed, a favorite of the monarch butterfly, is one of the plants that is regularly included in the rain gardens. With roughly 3,000 rain gardens built over the last few years, and thousands more planned for the coming years, monarch butterflies will have an expanding habitat throughout the five boroughs to both reproduce and feed during their annual migration.

## Escape to a Smoke-Free Life

**Mayor de Blasio** yesterday signed a series of bills to help reduce the number of smokers in New York City by 160,000 by 2020, helping NYC work towards reaching a historic low smoking rate of 12 percent. Tobacco continues to be a leading contributor to preventable, premature death in New York City, killing an estimated 12,000 people annually. The seven bills signed yesterday include raising the minimum prices for all tobacco products, imposing a new 10 percent local tax, capping and reducing the number of tobacco retailers city-wide, and banning the sale of tobacco products at pharmacies. Help is available to all DEP and New York City government employees who wish to stop smoking. Free quit-smoking support includes nicotine patches and gum, and confidential counseling provided by experienced specialists in-person or by phone. For more information call 212-676-2393 to make an appointment. You can quit. We can help!

## Ashokan Family Fishing Day



DEP will be hosting an annual Family Fishing Day on Sunday, September 17 from 9am to 1pm at the Woodstock Dike on Ashokan Reservoir (parking lot is located on a gravel driveway off Route 28, just east of the West Hurley Post Office). Don’t worry if you’re a beginner—DEP and DEC staff will be on hand to teach you how to fish! The event, co-sponsored by DEC, will provide fishing poles and bait to those who do not have their own, but all are encouraged to bring their own if they have it. Adults can obtain the **required** free DEP Access Permit and print it from home by [clicking here](#). Those interested in attending can also register for the event [here](#). As part of the “I Fish NY Program,” the New York State fishing license requirement will be waved. The 8,314-acre Ashokan Reservoir is home to many different species of fish, including smallmouth and largemouth bass, yellow and white perch, yellow and brown bullhead, sunfish, and trout. For more information email [watershedevents@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:watershedevents@dep.nyc.gov) or call 800-575-LAND.

## Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 23 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the Department from Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources and Administration **Zoe Ann Campbell**, Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott** and HR Specialist **Grace Franco**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

**Nicholas Barbarello**, **Godwin Joseph Latchum Russell** with BWSO; **Kelly Cahalan** with BWS; **Martire Danielle**, **Godfrey O. Franklin**, **Daniel A. Hernandez**, **Jacob B. Lewis**, **Joseph M. McGovern**, **Steven Orford** and **Elijah K. Street** with BCS; **Erlina Papraniku** with CDBG/BIB; **Haley Hix** and **Amanda Miller** with Sustainability; **Benjamin Huang**, **Liangbi Mei**, **Christopher Pagana**, **Arcelio W. Romain**, and **Abraham Zimroth** with BWT; **Ian Kennelty** and **Albert Munoz** with BEDC; **Kristen Molfetta** with BPAC; and **Kelly Nishikawa** with OLTPS.

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