



Environmental Protection

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

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DEP December Blood Drive

The Greater New York Blood Program is experiencing a serious shortage due to a fall-off in donations. More than 1,000 pints of blood are needed every day for hospitals serviced by the New York Blood Services, and a continuous and steady supply is essential because blood is perishable. It is estimated that more than 12,000 pints of blood donations were lost due to Hurricane Sandy.

DEP's December Blood Drive will take place between Monday, December 3, and Thursday, December 13. Please click here for specific dates and locations for your work areas. [G](#)

DEP has had the top collection in Queens for the past several years. So far this year, DEP

 **New York Blood Center**



employees have donated 1,275 pints of blood, and with your help we can make this the most successful year ever, and make sure that blood is available for those that really need it.

Spotlight on Safety

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

Guidelines have been established by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for disposal of household hazardous waste (HHW) generated as a result of Hurricane Sandy. HHW items should be disposed of properly to protect people's health and the environment.

HHW includes contaminated petroleum products, paints, varnishes and related products, pesticides, household cleaners, automobile fluids, batteries, some lawn and garden-care products and medicines.

The public is urged to separate potentially hazardous waste from the regular trash. In NYC, the De-

partment of Sanitation is picking up all HHW from the curbsides in neighborhoods affected by the storm surge from Hurricane Sandy until December 2. Outside of the city, the public should bring HHW to newly established drop-off locations, although curbside pick-up is available for some communities. [G](#)

Please note that any chemical or oil spills, such as from home heating oil tanks, must be reported to NYSDEC through the State's Spill Hotline at 1-800-457-7362. Any discovered spills at DEP facilities must be reported to your Bureau EHS Staff.

Visit www.dec.ny.gov for more detailed information.

Commissioner's Corner



Commissioner Strickland, joined by US EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, accepts the Urban Sustainability Citation from the Environmental Law Institute on behalf of Mayor Bloomberg

For the last four weeks we all have been working to recover from Hurricane Sandy, both at home and here at work. Catching up with other news, I want to take this opportunity to let you know that the critical, non-emergency work you do every day is also recognized. New York City's leadership role in water utility and urban environmental and sustainability issues has been recognized from coast to coast during the last month.

Just a week before Hurricane Sandy hit the region, I attended the 2012 Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA) Annual meeting in Portland, Oregon, and accepted the group's Platinum Award for utility excellence on behalf of the entire Department. AMWA—and our peer utilities on the judging committee—honored DEP for implementing its groundbreaking Strategic Plan, Strategy 2011-2014, and our efforts to improve the maintenance of our infrastructure through initiatives including H₂OStat and the Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance unit. AMWA also recognized DEP's commitment to identifying cost savings through the Operational Excellence program as well as our robust financial commitments to our water supply system, including the \$2.1 billion Water for

the Future Program, which will repair the Delaware Aqueduct, and the completion of City Water Tunnel No. 3.

In addition, DEP was recognized for the installation of Automated Meter Reading technology, which has reduced the cost of reading meters by \$3.4 million annually, and has proven to be an invaluable customer service tool. Since the inception of the program in 2011, DEP customers have saved more than \$12.5 million through the Leak Notification Program. Finally, DEP was honored for its expansive watershed protection program and for promoting recreational opportunities on city-owned lands in the watershed. It is a long list of leading programs across every bureau, and all of you deserve credit for doing an excellent job every day.

Earlier this month, I also travelled to Washington, D.C. and had the pleasure of standing in for **Mayor Bloomberg** to accept the Environmental Law Institute's (ELI) Urban Sustainability Citation on his behalf. ELI cited the Mayor's PlaNYC for setting a new standard for long-term urban planning with its wide-ranging set of initiatives to prepare New York for the challenges of a growing population, aging infrastructure, a changing climate, and an evolving economy by 2030.

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. [G](#)

Focus on the Field

When air and noise inspector **August Buffa** started working for DEP 20 years ago, his first assignment was with the Staten Island Expressway Highway Unit checking air emissions from cars and trucks to make sure they were in compliance with city laws. Today, Senior Inspector Buffa makes sure Manhattan's sky is clear of smoke and street noise levels are low so Big Apple residents can enjoy a better quality of life. To fulfill that task, Buffa is in charge of a 12-person unit that responds to complaints generated in the busiest borough in the city.

Among his daily duties is to make sure that air and noise complaints from city residents are responded to in a timely manner. "Our responsibility is the quality of life for people who live in Manhattan. Whether it is loud music from bars or odors coming from restaurants, we are there to make sure businesses are in compliance with the law," said Buffa.

Buffa's unit inspects about 1,000 locations per month and his main goal is to get a final resolution to every complaint. For Buffa, it is not about the numbers of violations issued;



it is about teaching residents and businesses about the law and resolving cases. This task has some challenges, including convincing complainants that the city is working tirelessly to solve the situation. Buffa says every day is rewarding because his team is able to find real solutions for New Yorkers. In fact, each month, 95% of all cases are addressed.

Buffa says the best part of his job is working with a group of professionals ready to tackle the work. "We all know our job is unique, it could take 30 minutes or it could take three hours to inspect a location and we always have good policies in place to make sure the work gets done the best possible way."

Kudos Corner



Each year the city recognizes one outstanding individual from each agency for their excellence in providing customer service. The candidates selected have been standouts in providing customer service, particularly in how they embody these four traits: courtesy, professionalism, knowledge, and promptness. This year, **Steven Barry**, DEP's call center director was recognized for his outstanding customer service skills and was honored at a ceremony on Wednesday, October 24, attended by Deputy Mayor for Operations (and former DEP Commissioner) **Cas Holloway**. Also recognized at the ceremony was **Donna Lamb**, BCS, who received a Customer Service Professional Certificate.

Did You Know

...DEP's fleet has 580 vehicles that run on B5 biodiesel fuel? B5 labeling indicates that the fuel is 5% biodiesel, 95% petrodiesel.

Recycled restaurant grease, also known as yellow grease, is an inexpensive and easily refined material used in the production of biodiesel fuel. Biodiesel is a domestic, renewable fuel for diesel trucks, cars, buses and tractors and is made from agricultural coproducts and byproducts such as soybean oil, other natural oils, and greases.

In 2011, nearly 8.3 million gallons of yellow grease were collected by licensed haulers from 17,000 restaurants in New York City, enough to make 6.7 million gallons of biodiesel fuel. During the same time 1.07 billion gallons of biodiesel were produced in the U.S according to the National Biodiesel Board.

(Commissioner's Corner... continued)

ELI also recognized PlaNYC because while it is a blueprint to ensure that New York City is livable and sustainable for the next century, it is already providing tangible benefits for New Yorkers today in the form of new parks, more transportation options, cleaner water, and lower energy consumption. Additionally, we are already halfway to our goal of reducing climate-changing greenhouse

gas emissions by 30% by the year 2030.

Although Sandy has dominated the headlines during the last four weeks, the recent recognition DEP has received from our colleagues is impressive and important, and reflects the talent of the nearly 6,000 men and women who work for our agency. I thank you all for the hard work and dedication you demonstrate every day.

Beyond New York



The Stickney Water Reclamation Plant is the largest wastewater treatment facility in the world. The plant serves 2.38 million people in a 260 square-mile area, including the central part of Chicago and 43 suburban communities. It has a design capacity of 1.2 billion gallons per day. Stickney actually consists of two plants; the west side portion of the plant was placed into service in 1930 and the southwest portion of the plant was placed into service in 1939. It is part of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

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