

## Special Guest Commissioner's Corner



**Tasos Georgelis**, Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, is a guest commentator this week.

A few weeks ago I joined fellow BWSO staffers to tour just a few of the many projects DEP is currently undertaking in southeast Queens. These projects are part of **Mayor de Blasio's** commitment of \$1.7 billion to address flooding in Queens

neighborhoods between Jamaica, Glen Oaks, Rosedale and Springfield Gardens. The bulk of this funding will go towards the construction of large trunk sewer spines along 150<sup>th</sup> Street, Guy Brewer Boulevard, Farmers Boulevard and Springfield Boulevard. These trunk sewers will be constructed through at least 18 separate projects and will include crossings of the LIRR,



Air Train, Belt Parkway, Van Wyck Expressway, Nassau Expressway and Long Island Aqueduct. Dozens of other smaller sewer projects are in the planning stages or already in construction throughout neighborhoods in southeast Queens.

Stops on the tour included a \$20 million sewer project in St. Albans along 119<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a \$12 million sewer project in Baisley Pond along Lakeview Boulevard East, a \$3.6 million sewer project along 208<sup>th</sup> Street in Queens Village, a \$25 million sewer project in Rosedale near Hook Creek Boulevard, and a \$9.3 million water and sewer infrastructure upgrade project in Glen Oaks.

Many roadways in southeast Queens lack adequate stormwater infrastructure, including catch basins and sewers, which has contributed to chronic flooding in some areas during heavy rain. All the projects we toured are currently underway and aim to significantly improve drainage and reduce flooding in each community.

In addition to traditional gray infrastructure projects like these, BEPA is pursuing projects that include an estimated 200 curbside rain gardens in and around Cambria Heights and Queens Village to intercept stormwater before it ever enters the sewer system. Other improvements for southeast Queens, coordinated through BEPA, include green infrastructure components at three City parks, two public schools, and one NYCHA facility. Bluebelts are also being constructed to help manage stormwater at Springfield Lake, Baisley Pond, Twin Ponds and Brookville Triangle.

The BWSO team has been, and continues to be, aggressive in tackling flooding issues in southeast Queens. I want to thank my colleagues in BWSO and BEPA, as well as our partners at the Department of Design and Construction and the Department of Transportation, for their assistance in bringing this critical infrastructure to neighborhoods most in need.

## Spotlight on Safety

### 2017 Tick Season

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the number of reported cases of Lyme disease in the United States has tripled since the late 1990s. A key reason is that in 2015, oak trees produced more acorns, a significant food source for white-footed mice. These mice are the most common carriers of several tick-borne illnesses, such as the common Lyme disease and the rarer more serious Powassan virus. They are also the primary hosts of black-legged ticks. In addition to the increased number of ticks, recent warmer winters caused by climate change are allowing ticks to remain active longer and carry diseases into new regions of the U.S. A concern is

that a rise in the tick population can lead to more serious tick-borne diseases.

To protect yourself from ticks, use the following precautions:

- wear light-colored clothing (long pants and sleeves) to be able to spot ticks
- continuously check clothing and skin for ticks during and after spending time outside
- tuck pants legs into socks
- apply insect repellent to clothing
- if you find a tick on your skin, remove it immediately
- if you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor

For more information, visit the [CDC's 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 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.





## Press Box



### DEP JOINS COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH TO CLEAN SHEEPSHEAD BAY

DEP joined Monday with Council Member **Chaim Deutsch** to [clean Sheepshead Bay](#), particularly the debris that had accumulated alongside the perimeter of the Shore Boulevard Mall near Holocaust Memorial Park. Two, two-man teams in small jon boats used nets to scoop up small floatables that were trapped opposite the Ocean Avenue footbridge. Trash discarded on city streets and sidewalks can wash down catch basins and end up in our surrounding waterbodies—threatening marine wildlife, putting human health at risk, and negatively impacting recreational activities such as swimming, fishing and boating. In nearby Coney Island, DEP recently launched the “[Don’t Trash Our Waters](#)” public awareness campaign aimed at reducing litter and improving the health of New York City’s waterbodies.

## Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 10 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!

**William T. Cruger** and **Carly E. Reilly** with BWS; **Dean C. Wilder** with BWSO; **Shahinur Rahim** with BWT; **Nicholas Chaya**, **Marian Chen**, **Sam Samaan** (not pictured), **Dahilil A. Vazquez** and **Ravi Vempalle** with CDBG; and **Kathryn M. Kelly** with Sustainability.

## Invasive Species Awareness Week



DEP is once again supporting a statewide effort to [educate New Yorkers about invasive species](#), their effects on our ecosystems, and what citizens can do to prevent their spread across the watershed and other parts of the state. To mark New York Invasive Species Awareness Week, July 9-15, DEP set up an education tent at the Pakatakan Farmers Market in Delaware County in order to share information with watershed residents. As the effects of invasive species are seen throughout the state, DEP has continued to protect the watershed through education and outreach efforts, surveys to identify new infestations early, and control projects to suppress the growth of priority invasive species that could threaten water quality by hampering or changing forest regeneration, or affecting the ecology of watershed streams and reservoirs.

## Summer Interns—Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 28 summer interns 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**, HR Specialist **Grace Franco** and Recruitment Coordinator **Briana Lomax-Day**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

**Anika Azra**, **Adam Botier**, **James Chau**, **Tayla Fernandez**, **Fathy Gauthier**, **Abed Islam**, **Daniella Jauregui**, **Brian Lee**, **Nang Hnon Lin**, **Zeng Lin** (not pictured), **Brannon Ma**, **Johnny Mendoza**, **Zahed Miah**, **Luis Mina**, **Aishrja Mojumdar**, **Deborah Omolola**, **Jaiden Roberts**, **Jordan Roberts**, **Murshedur Shahy**, **John Theriot Jr.**, **Jonathan Ustaev** (not pictured), **Aaliyah Vega**, **Dean C. Wilder**, **Paul Wilson**, **Andy Yeung**, **Sarah Yu** (not pictured), **Milana Yusupova** and **Queencia Zhang**.

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