

K-9 Unit Gives Criminals Reason to 'Paws'



The K-9 unit within the Bureau of Police and Security was created in 2003 as an important part of enhancing the bureau's core mission—preserving the safety and purity of New York City's watershed. Although the idea for the unit was devised before 9/11, the events of that tragic day gave the unit a

new focus on explosives detection and other counterterrorism measures that are now standard operating procedure. Today, K-9 teams are distributed throughout the downstate and upstate watersheds to conduct patrols and respond to any type of emergency.

(Continued on reverse side)

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Audit Finding of the Month

Wards island WWTP (Sharon Project) Finding Ref. No. S 15: Eight (8) above ground chemical bulk storage tanks are not properly labeled to communicate the contents of the tank and the appropriate hazard warning.

It may appear excessive to label or mark an above ground storage tank, its piping, and other components with information such as the chemical name, total capacity, working capacity, hazardous substances that may be stored permanently and compatibly within the tank, model number, and name of manufacturer. This information, however, is used for purposes other than just warning employees about potential hazards.

Labeling and marking above ground storage tanks is covered under federal, state, and local regulations, which primarily focus on ensuring safe operation and preventing or col-

lecting spills or leaks from the tank. DEP's requirements for labeling are more related to providing information to first responders in emergency situations. This allows them to quickly recognize the dangers from substance(s) stored inside the tank(s), and allows them to better plan and carry out appropriate responses to an emergency.

Two documents provide appropriate guidance for labeling above ground tanks. DEP's Chemical Bulk Storage Tank and Container Management Policy (C) and (C) provides guidance to DEP and contractor personnel for labeling above ground tanks. The New York City Community Right-to-Know Laws and Regulations (C), also provide guidance for labeling DEP facilities' tanks. They are also the regulations to ensure compliance with the labeling of certain substances within city businesses and facilities.

Commissioner's Corner

Information is key to DEP's ability to provide efficient and cost-effective service to our customers. Last week, I visited with DEP field staff to learn how our records of past projects have been preserved as a vital source of information—and how technology is continually improving our ability to put that information to good use.

Located on the east side of Manhattan, DEP's archives offer critical insight into the history of our water system. Under the stewardship of Director **Samar Qandil**, the archives contain original drawings from the very earliest days of our water supply, with some documents dating back to the Revolutionary War. I was shown a promissory note issued to fund the city's first water-works system, a project begun in 1774 and destroyed during the British occupation in 1776. Dated more than a century later were drawings for the New Croton Aqueduct, including one from 1885 of the blow-off and weir allowing water to flow to Tibbett's Brook. In the illustration, each masonry stone was numbered for placement, an essential blueprint for construction and now an indelible record of the city's early water supply system. I would like to thank Samar and her dedicated staff, **Athena Danalakis** and **Karen Murphy**, as well as interns **Jonathan Lawler**, **Allie Janvey** and **Charlene Romani** for guiding me on this fascinating tour.

The hand-drawn maps of the 19th Century are a far cry from our methods today, with the latest technology allowing us to update our records while DEP performs critical inspections in the field. On Thursday, I joined BEC Inspector **Eugenia Leonidou** as she responded to a 311 asbestos complaint. Previously, inspectors received hard copy complaints and had to return to the office to submit reports. Under the Asbestos Reporting and Tracking System (ARTS), iPads are now used to schedule and conduct asbestos inspections, as well as to review notifications and other related documents. As complaints are received through 311, inspections are scheduled and assigned through the iPad. Inspectors respond to complaints and submit reports electronically for real-time



review by supervisors, who then update the Hansen Work Management system or permit records where appropriate. Additionally, iPads allow our asbestos inspectors to review building histories of any filings or complaints, providing a more comprehensive assessment of a particular address.

Our BWSO supervisors are also using the latest technology in the field: Beginning this July, field vehicles were equipped with Tough-Book computers that are used to access and review detailed interactive GIS maps of New York City's water and sewer systems. Along with remote access to Hansen, this technology offers interactive features such as original construction drawings and specialized tools for quickly identifying open work orders and customer service requests by location in real-time. After leaving Inspector Leonidou, I met BWSO Emergency Operations Managers **Paul Vilella** and **Tom Votta** as they responded to a complaint of a cellar leak. Upon arriving at the site, they pulled up the work history of the address in question; previously, these inquiries would have to be made at the office. The supervisors were able to access both Field Cards and Tap Cards for the address, which respectively document the complaint and water service line histories. Using GIS technology to access these working archives saves time and improves accuracy.

In related news, today we welcomed **Jin Chang** as DEP's new Chief Information Officer. Jin's wealth of experience and expertise—including the upgrade, integration and replacement of many legacy systems—will be a critical addition to meeting our needs as a 24/7 utility serving our customers. Good luck!

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. 🐾

Focus on the Field



Greenburg, Ardsley, Yonkers and the Bronx.

Frank is one of six officers that are part of K-9 teams and those dogs have names like Ado, Brixo, Argus, Ecco, and Nikko. Typically the canines are German Shepherds, though the program has used other breeds such as the Belgian Malinois breed. Frank's K-9 partner is Kadan a two-year-old German Shepherd. Frank had worked previously with only one other dog, also a German Shepherd, named Phil. Handlers care for their canine partners at home. All teams have received extensive training; maintenance training is taken by each unit to refine the skills required. "We are some of the most successful and skilled Canine Divisions throughout the watershed." Besides DEP Police, Frank works closely with NYPD, FDNY, and other first responders.

Frank relishes his spare time and is often spending quality time with his family and friends, and enjoying the outdoors either fishing or hunting.

It is not likely that **Frank Emmett** will object to anyone saying that "a dog is man's best friend." For the nearly six years that Environmental Police Officer Frank Emmett has been with DEP, he has been a canine handler with the K-9 unit of the Bureau of Police and Security. The Bureau protects water sources, infrastructure and personnel employed by DEP. Policing for criminal activity or terrorism includes patrolling, investigating, and apprehending suspects if necessary. Based at the Hillview Reservoir, Frank is part of the 7th Precinct that patrols several areas in and out of New York City that includes

Kodak Moment



Kurt Gabel, East of Hudson Field Director for the Bureau of Water Supply, Watershed Water Quality Operations, demonstrates water quality monitoring to scouts from Ulster County's Troop 163 at the Kensico Reservoir on Thursday, September 25. Scouts and their leaders, **David Heberle**, **Keith Davis**, and **Rob Overton** had only one more day to complete their almost 100-mile, nine-day watershed to New York City trek. Congratulations Troop 163!

Kudos Corner



On Thursday, September 1 **Ikenna Anyanwu**, a DERTA employee, participated in the "Fastest Replenisher" competition at the National BioWatch Conference. The competition involves filter change-out with accurate chain-of-custody completed. He competed against other jurisdictions (30 in total) and won the competition with a record breaking time of 1 minute and 54 seconds.

(K-9 Unit Gives Criminals Reason to 'Paws'... continued)

The unit is made up of six handlers and six dogs, with each pair forming a K-9 team. The dogs that make up the unit bear little resemblance to their small apartment friendly cousins that call New York City home. Most are German Shepherds, and one is a Belgium Malawa.

Another important difference between the members of the K-9 unit and the regulars at the dog walk is the training that each team receives. All the dogs within the unit are purchased "green" or without any special training. The path to becoming a K-9 team requires both dog and handler to attend 8-12 weeks of patrol and tracking school followed by another 8-12 weeks learning explosives detection. The culmination of this rigorous training program is a K-9 team that is uniquely qualified to protect one of New York City's greatest assets.

The training teaches critical techniques, but it also creates an important bond between dog and handler. This bond is essential as the two are nearly inseparable while on duty. Together they perform security sweeps of vehicles

and buildings; conduct regular patrols, and help locate missing children and lost recreationalists.

The K-9 unit is also available to assist state and local law enforcement. In one recent case, a K-9 team helped track down an article of clothing that led to the arrest of a man wanted for burglary in a nearby town. Environmental Police Officer **Frank Emmett** describes his unit as "first and foremost responsible for protecting New York City's water supply, but we are always willing to lend a hand to our up-state partners."

While the human members of the K-9 unit can serve and protect for decades, the active service length of a canine member is only 8-12 years. The decision to retire a dog is based on health and his/her ability to perform the security tasks required. Once a dog is retired, the handler is given the option to adopt the dog from the city for free. When asked about the possibility of a dog not being adopted, Officer Emmett laughed and said "I can assure you, they will all be adopted."

Word of the Week

Baffle: A guide or similar device placed in flowing wastewater to create uniform flow velocities that restricts or diverts liquids.

SEPTEMBER BLOOD DRIVE TOTALS: DEP employees donated a total of 563 pints of blood during the September blood drive. Thanks to everyone for a successful drive.

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