

Strength in Diversity



The City's workforce should be representative of the City itself: talented, dedicated, passionate, and diverse. By maintaining our employees' rights and making sure that they're free from discrimination and biases, we manage to employ only the best and the brightest. That's why DEP's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program is so important: they're here for everybody, protecting the rights guaranteed by TITLE VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and City Human Rights Law, and ensuring that everyone at DEP can work together as a team to serve the people of New York.

The EEO office consists of six employees and is assisted by a team of twenty-two liaisons that represent the Agency's bureaus. Headed by EEO Director **Martha Osenni**, the office is responsible for imple-

menting the City's EEO policies by receiving and investigating internal complaints of discrimination and handling EEO-related inquiries. They also train the Agency's employees, including new hires and their supervisors.

The EEO Office also handles Reasonable Accommodations for disabilities, religious observance, and victims of domestic violence, stalking and sexual offenses. They'll also mediate workplace disputes, participate in recruitment efforts, conduct site visits and inspections, and promote diversity through initiatives such as the EEO Views Newsletter, and presentations by the Diversity Committee.

"The diversity of this Agency represents a wonderful opportunity, but also presents a challenge," says Martha Osenni. "It's an important part of our job to help our employees embrace that diversity and to work together effectively." Discrimination in the workplace is unacceptable, and our employees have the right and expect to be judged on their job performance; and managers throughout the agency should keep diversity in mind when

(Continued on reverse side)

Spotlight on Safety

Hard Hat Do's & Don'ts

A survey by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics noted that 84% of workers who suffered impact injuries to the head were not wearing head protection. By following some simple safety tips, you can prevent workplace head injuries.

DO:

- Make sure your hard hat fits correctly.
- Inspect daily for cracks or dents.
- Store away from sunlight, chemicals, or extreme heat or cold.

DON'T:

- Wear a hard hat over another hat.
- Place anything in the suspension area of your hard hat.
- Cover your hard hat with decals or stickers.
- Wear a hat with a crack.

As always, employees should be properly trained on using their Personal Protective Equipment and follow DEP's written Personal Protective Equipment policy. [Click here](#)

for more Hard Hat Do's & Don'ts [Click here](#)

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. [Click here](#)

Commissioner's Corner



This week we completed two major infrastructure projects. On Wednesday, Transportation Commissioner **Janette Sadik-Khan**, Design and Construction Commissioner **David Burney** and I announced the completion of the \$53 million Flushing Avenue reconstruction project that will ensure a more reliable water supply for northern Brooklyn [Click here](#). And on Thursday, we announced the completion of an \$11.4 million project that will add thousands of feet of sanitary and storm sewers in Staten Island to ease flooding and eliminate septic tank backups. These are quality-of-life projects that will help us deliver high-quality drinking water, and treat wastewater each day in an environmentally friendly way [Click here](#). Thanks to **Nicholas Barbaro**, Chief of the Project Development Section, **Peter Gordon**, Engineer-in-Charge for the Staten Island project, and **Amil Fanouse**, Engineer-in-Charge for the Flushing Avenue reconstruction. I'd also like to recognize the entire DDC team for their hard work on our behalf all year to improve the water and sewer system. We couldn't do the work that we do without them.

On Tuesday, I travelled to New Jersey with DC for Water Supply **Paul Rush**, DC for Sustainability **Carter Strickland**, and Associate Commissioner **Matt Mahoney** to meet **Bob Martin**, the new Commissioner for the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Conservation. New Jersey is an impor-

tant partner in the protection of the Delaware Watershed and River, which supplies cities and towns all the way to Delaware Bay. New York State is a member (and the City is an advisory member) along with New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania, of the Delaware River Basin Commission that was established in 1961 at the White House with President Kennedy. You can read about it here [Click here](#). Since then, we have worked with all the Commission members to ensure that the Delaware River can adequately supply the entire region. We had a productive meeting, and agreed to continue working together closely.

On Friday, DC for Police and Security **Kevin McBride**, Chief **Peter Fusco** and I attended a promotion for **Valentina Gojcaj**, who became DEP's Deputy Security Director; DEP Police officer **Aubrey Zephyr**, who was promoted to Detective, and Lieutenants **Robert W. Wisker** and **Brian C. Handy**, who were promoted to Captain. These individuals have distinguished themselves in their service the City, and we owe them a great deal of thanks for their remarkable contributions. Congratulations to all!

Finally, I'd like to welcome the City's new Deputy Mayor for Operations, **Stephen Goldsmith**, who started at City Hall on June 1 (but came to visit us at Lefrak City well before that). Deputy Mayor Goldsmith formerly served as the Mayor of Indianapolis, and after that, as the Director of Innovations in American Government at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and Chair of the AmeriCorps National Service Program under **Presidents Obama** and **Bush**. We look forward to working with him to implement **Mayor Bloomberg's** ambitious agenda.

EHS Survey Reminder: Check out the EHS Survey Snapshot on the back page. A paper questionnaire is being made available for employees who do not have computer access. Please make sure your voice is heard! [Click here](#) Deadline is June 18th.

Employee of the Month Awards Reminder: Please submit your nomination forms for your fellow employees who have distinguished themselves as a leader in EHS by June 10, 2010. [Click here](#) to nominate [Click here](#).



DEP's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program is a lot more than just laws, guidelines and policies. EEO Investigators travel to every facility DEP operates in the five boroughs and in the watershed to meet with and help our employees. They're here for us.

EEO Investigator **Michael Walczynyn** is responsible for addressing employees' concerns about discrimination and sexual harassment. He also presents EEO training and assists in accommodating employees who have disabilities, are victims of domestic violence or who need an accommodation for religious observances. All of this is in an effort to ensure that DEP remains a diverse, safe and great place to work. He reports to **Martha Osenni**, the Director of EEO, who reports directly to **Commissioner Holloway**.

Michael started at DEP as a College Aide in 1988, left to pursue other opportunities, and then returned to the Agency in 2003. His

primary mission is to ensure the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment. "Not everyone is going to get along with everyone else," Michael states, "but DEP and the EEO Office have historically gone above and beyond to ensure that our employees' concerns are heard and addressed appropriately."

That sort of mission is critical for an agency with more than 6,000 employees of all races, religions and national origins. Michael notes he—and DEP's EEO program—benefits New York City by helping to "retain and embrace a diverse workforce." It's a lot of work: "The job has taken me to some remote locations in every corner of the City and upstate," Michael says. Michael also adds that he and other members of the EEO team will conduct facility inspections in areas that most of DEP's employees will never even see, adding that if one Agency employee ever goes there, then the EEO Office will too.

Michael completed Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations' EEO Studies program as well as a course with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to work as an EEO professional. When not at work, Michael loves to travel whenever and wherever he can.

EHS Survey Snapshot

As of June 6, 2010, 735 DEP employees have participated in the EHS survey.

A few things we have learned so far...

- 58% of employees go to their supervisor when they have an EHS concern; 33% go to their Safety Officer or their Bureau EHS staff; 1% to the EHS Hotline or Union Representative.
- Most popular training formats are Classroom, hands-on training, on-the-job training and computer based training (in that order).
- Close to 80% of employees that worked at DEP five years ago say that EHS compliance, awareness and communications are better now.
- A large portion (45%) of employees offered additional insightful and valuable comments/suggestions, which will be coded, compiled and analyzed for further action.
- Of the largest bureaus, BWT, BWSO, BWS and BEDC, BWS has the highest response rate so far (22%)!

Q. While reading last week's AskCas, it reminded me that fire hydrants are connected to the same water mains that serve the drinking water supply. I am not familiar with backflow preventer usage, but would like to know if all the fire hydrants need to or are required to have the back flow preventers, as do all household water supply lines?
Pravin Patel, Chief of Compliance, Engineering Section, BWT

A. There is no requirement for City fire hydrants to have an internal backflow prevention device (BPD), but anyone using a fire hydrant (other than FDNY) is required to have a BPD on the connection to the hydrant or have an approved four (4) inch air gap, unless in the Department's opinion, the application does not pose a backflow hazard, such as watering a community garden – or our NYC Water-on-the-Go stations. The New York State Sanitary Code stipulates that any potentially hazardous business or operation requires an approved BPD on the service connection. Private households are not required to have a BPD.

(Strength in Diversity... - continued)

they are hiring employees at every level."

EEO investigators travel throughout the five boroughs and our Upstate watershed, conducting training or investigating complaints, and meeting with bureau management. Moreover, these visits also give our investigators an opportunity to meet with DEP's employees on a more informal basis. Making these connections—and letting our employees know that our EEO team is out there—is an important way to make sure that we maintain a professional and respectful workplace.

DEP's EEO office has made great strides in promoting the culture of EEO throughout the agency. They've also had a lot of success mediating workplace disputes—remember that there's always a way to resolve our problems peacefully and professionally. But, there's a lot more that EEO wants to do, and they want to hear your comments and suggestions. If you need to reach out to them, you can contact the EEO Office directly or you can contact your bureau liaison with any feedback or discuss your concerns.

To learn more about EEO click here

Milestones

Congratulations to **Joseph Landau**, BWS, for 35 years of service.

Congratulations to **Manoj Kurian**, BWT whose wife **Reeja** gave birth to a baby boy, **Arian**, on 6/2/10.

Congratulations to **Alexa Silverstein**, CTU/Executive, who graduated from Queens College, with a B.A. in Psychology and Sociology.

Event Calendar:

DEP June Blood Drive, 6/15, 6/16, 6/17, from 8:00 am – 1:30 pm, 6th Floor Training Rooms, Lefrak High Rise. To read the Commissioner's Memo, please click here .

Special Event: June 10; 10 am to 12 pm; 3rd Floor Cafeteria
Guest Speaker: **Jane LaTour**, author of "SISTERS IN THE BROTHERHOODS: Working Women Organizing for Equality in New York City."

6th Annual NYC Comedy Night for Clean Water, Sponsored by NYC Chapter of **Water for People (WFP)**; 6/15 at 8 pm, Gotham Comedy Club, 208 West 23rd St. For tickets and prices, call 212-367-9000. All are welcome. Questions re WFP at DEP contact DionneR@dep.nyc.gov.

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