

16 DEP Police Officers Promoted



Last week, DEP promoted 16 veteran environmental police officers during a ceremony at the Staff Sgt. Robert H. Dietz DEP Police Academy in Kingston, NY. The DEP Police Division was established more than 100 years ago. Its 220 members are charged with protecting 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, more than 185,000 acres of watershed land, roughly 300 miles of aqueducts, 29 water supply dams, 57 bridges, seven wastewater treatment plants, and more than 280 shafts, chambers, laboratories, and treatment facilities that help the water system function. These facilities and lands stretch across parts of eight counties and roughly 2,000 square miles of watershed. DEP Police patrol the watershed by foot, bicycle, all-terrain vehicle, boat, and helicopter. They also maintain specially trained units, including a Detective Bureau, Emergency Service Unit, Canine Unit, and Aviation Unit. Congratulations to all!

Spotlight on Safety

Preventing Blind Spot Backover Incidents

Backover incidents, where a vehicle hits someone or something while backing up, is often caused by the blind spot created by vehicle side mirrors. In recent years, many newer automobiles have come equipped with blind spot detection technologies. These systems use cameras or radar to scan the adjoining lanes for vehicles, pedestrians or other objects that may have disappeared from view. For those who drive vehicles without these systems, the [Society for Automotive Engineers \(SAE\)](#) suggests ways in which outside mirrors can be adjusted to eliminate blind spots.

In a paper published in 1995, the SAE instructs drivers to adjust the

mirrors so far outward that the viewing angle of the side mirrors just overlaps that of the cabin's rearview mirror. Many drivers who have switched to this method swear by it, however other drivers find it difficult to get used to. For instance, when the mirrors are adjusted in this way, drivers can no longer see the flanks of their own car in the side mirrors and this may seem disorienting at first. However, the SAE stands by their method of adjusting mirrors, saying it successfully eliminates blind spots and drivers should become used to the new view in their mirrors.

For more information, please see the article from [Popular Mechanics](#).

Commissioner's Corner



reliable supply of water for the future, more than 5,900 linear feet of water mains were replaced. Also, while the streets were open, 3,800 linear feet of sanitary sewers were upgraded. DDC is currently waiting for warmer weather so that the affected streets can be permanently repaved.

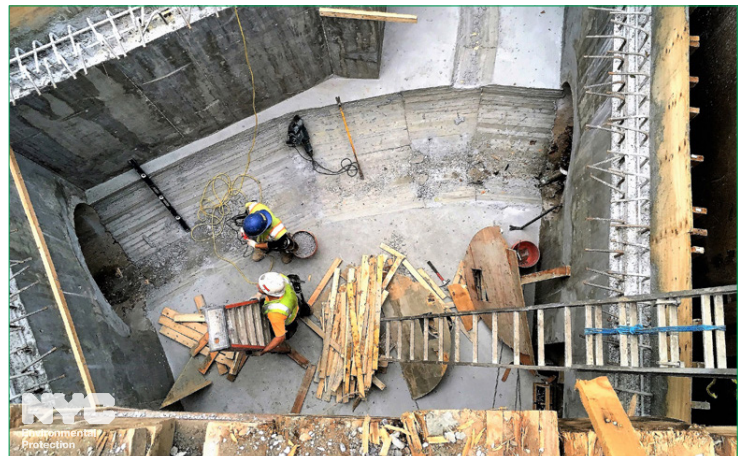
This project is just the beginning of the Mayor's historic commitment of \$1.9 billion to reducing flooding and improving the quality of life in southeast Queens. The bulk of the funding will go towards the construction of large trunk sewer spines along 150th Street, Guy Brewer Boulevard, Farmers Boulevard and Springfield Boulevard. This work will take place through approximately 15 separate projects, the first breaking ground later this year. Dozens of smaller local sewer projects, such as Lucas Street, will connect neighborhoods to the trunk sewer spines.

This almost \$22 million investment in St. Albans will help to reduce the flooding that can occur during heavy rain storms and relieve residents and businesses of some of their worry and concern. I'd like to thank the DEP staff that is working on the southeast Queens buildout, and DDC Acting Commissioner Ana Barrio and her agency for their efforts in managing this vital construction project.

As the agency continues to upgrade and improve the drainage infrastructure in southeast Queens, I am pleased to announce that we are on track to complete a \$21.8 million project in St. Albans three months ahead of schedule.

More than 4,100 linear feet of new storm sewers have been installed adjacent to older storm sewers, functioning in tandem to greatly expand drainage capacity along Lucas Street and adjoining neighborhoods. Additionally, 21 new catch basins were installed over the length of the project, targeted to flood-prone areas, and 38 catch basins were replaced with new ones. Curbs were also repaired, where necessary, to help reduce ponding in the neighborhood and to direct stormwater to the expanded network of sewers and catch basins.

To improve water distribution in the area and help to ensure a



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



The North River Wastewater Treatment Plant is an integral part of DEP's network of wastewater treatment infrastructure citywide. The plant, which sits below the 28-acre Riverbank State Park, provides wastewater treatment to hundreds of thousands of people who work, live, and visit the west side of Manhattan—from Greenwich Village to Inwood Hill—and is designed to handle up to 340 million gallons of wastewater on a wet weather day. Managing a plant of this size—and its 100 employees, is no small feat, but it is expertly lead by Plant Chief **Kiah Miller**.

The married father of three is a native of Washington Heights and grew up, and still lives, a few blocks from the facility. After attending Brooklyn Tech High School, Miller honed his skills as a mechanical operator in the Air Force, serving in Germany and California, before returning home to New York City. Miller then joined DEP in 1992 as a sewage treatment worker at North River, which was followed by stints in BWT's training section and at Wards Island.

"The military helped me as a supervisor in a sense that it gave a structure for highlighting each person's role in an organization as a team member, so there is a clear expectation of how each person fits into the system," he said. "It instilled in me a willingness to train and prepare future supervisors, future leaders."

Miller's role in managing North River is unique, as he is not only responsible for its daily operations and maintenance needs, but he also serves as a critical link to the community and as a liaison to the construction team coordinating the plant's first major upgrade since it was completed in 1986. The plant is in the midst of a 5-year, \$280 million

project to replace the 10 existing engines that power the plant with newer and more efficient electric motors along with a new cogeneration facility consisting of 5 new dual fuel (natural and digester gas) engines. Miller has been working closely with BEDC and the design firm to provide valuable input throughout the construction process.

"A principal role I play, and our team plays here, is figuring out how this important capital work is going to be done around normal every-day operations," he said. "It takes a huge amount of cooperation to make sure all our equipment stays online, and, most importantly, to make sure both our employees and contractors are safe."

In addition to making sure all goes smoothly with the physical plant, Miller is passionate about developing DEP's next set of operators. He is currently developing training for new employees as new equipment comes online, making sure the operation of the equipment is user-friendly and that staff are trained to work with new technologies.

"My aim is to leave a well-prepared work force. I certainly see folks that are ambitious and intelligent and want to learn more. Those are the people that we're looking at, seeing them not only as sewage treatment workers, but future engineers. We try to be deliberate about training them and helping them get to where they want to go."

Miller points to fostering teamwork as being critical to the successful 24-7 operation of a facility of this size. He is also committed to exposing staffers to a wide range of duties and giving them experiences that will prepare them with specific skills that they'll need, not just for today, but for tomorrow and into the future. After a quarter century in the industry, he says it's an exciting time to be in the field.

One thing he's noticed throughout his tenure at DEP is that staffers at North River have started to stay for longer durations. "We have more people on the transfer list to come here than to go out. Things are changing and it's a powerful indicator. It means that people are really invested in this place. They want to be here, and it's a great opportunity."

Buy Local, Eat Healthy



A note from **Helene Abiola**, with the *WorkWell NYC Program*

Local, organic, and genetically modified. These 3 words have particular relevance to something we all do every day—eat. But what does it all mean? Find out below:

- **Local food** is grown and created close to where it is sold. Local food doesn't have to literally grow in your backyard, your city, or even your state, but it does have to be produced in your geographic region. You may notice that local food often tastes fresher and more flavorful than the conventional options in your grocery store and that's because it doesn't have to travel thou-

sands of miles or sit in a truck for days at a time. Local food producers are often small business owners that don't grow the massive quantities needed to profitably sell in supermarkets. Food hubs, farmers markets, and farm shares play a pivotal role in connecting these small businesses to consumers like ourselves.

- **"Organic"** is a term often used interchangeably with healthy food, but organic actually refers to crops grown in a manner that is compliant with organic farming standards. Foods that are organically farmed aren't pesticide- and chemical-laden because organic growing methods require the use of natural composts, fertilizers, and pest controls. In this country, any foods that bear the label "organic" are regulated by the US Department of Agriculture.

The Corbin Hill Farm Share that comes to Lefrak every Thursday brings our employees a combination of local, organic, and non-genetically modified foods (to learn more about GM foods, [click here](#)). Here's to healthy eating!

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 11 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott** and Recruitment Coordinator **Briana Lomax-Day**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Patrick Giles and **Jason Z. Ye** with BEDC; **Grace Grubman** with BWS; **Matthew L. Lewis**, **Silvia Lorenzo**, **Jacob C. Sanua** and **Francis D. Vichi** with BWSO; **John A. Biswas** with BWT; **Adam S. Finkelstein** with CDBG; **Ricardo Petithomme** with OD&HR; and **Sophia Babai** with Sustainability.

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