

THESE BLUEBELTS ARE SO GREEN



Managing stormwater is an enormous challenge. Even a little bit of rain can generate unbelievable amounts of stormwater that demands proper conveyance and treatment: if only 1/8 of an inch of rain falls in the drainage area for the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, that means that the Plant will have to process an additional 63 million gallons of stormwater—enough to fill about 96 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Because of climate change, we've seen more frequent and more intense storms. This new pattern is going to present DEP with additional challenges, and **Mayor Bloomberg** has made stormwater management a key component of PlaNYC, the comprehensive strategy for making New York a more sustainable, healthier, and greener City by 2030.

That's why green infrastructure, like the award-winning Staten

(Continued on reverse side)

Spotlight on Safety

DEP Has An Improved Employee EHS Concerns Policy!

An enhanced Employee Concerns Policy (ECP) is going into effect on 6/30/10. The improved ECP offers additional resources to resolve your EHS concerns:

- If you believe that, 1) there is an immediately dangerous situation or 2) you are being given a direction that would violate an EHS regulation (a Group 2 concern), your Bureau now has trained On-Call Responders (OCRs). OCRs, who will be available 24/7, will work to resolve your concern, responding at your work site, if necessary/appropriate.

- If you have a concern that does not involve retaliation (Group 1) or an EHS emergency (Group 2), you may now contact your bureau's **Employee Concerns Liaison (ECL)**. ECLs, who may be contacted directly or through the Hotline, have been trained to resolve all your other EHS concerns (Group 3).

Any employee can call the ECP Hotline at 1-800-897-9677. You will receive more information and ECL contacts soon. Questions? Contact your Bureau EHS, Safety Officer or OEHS.

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.

Commissioner's Corner



**BEST OF THE BEST
WATER TASTE TEST**

the problem. Special thanks to Grahamsville Regional Manager **Ira Stern**, who has worked closely with the leadership and residents of Wawarsing, and is spearheading our efforts there on the ground.

On Tuesday, New York City was the top performer of any large city at the American Water Works Association "Best of the Best Water Taste Test" National Contest! Outlasting dozens of entrants in earlier rounds throughout the country, we were awarded second place overall against 22 other national finalists—the top finish ever for NYC Water. Congratulations to Stevens Point, Wisconsin for taking top prize. This national recognition underscores the hard work that our nearly 6,000 employees do every day, and we raise a glass of NYC's best tap to their efforts. But we can't rest yet . . . next year, we have to take home the gold!

One of the key reasons we performed so well is because we continue to invest in the infrastructure that protects the purity of our source water and delivers more than one billion gallons of drinking water each day. Last week, we completed a \$20 million project in Maspeth, Queens that upgraded more than 3,300 feet of aging water mains. And as you can see in the Staten Island Advance, DEP also replaced more than 3,200 feet of water mains with ductile iron pipes that are more suited to high-volume circulation in Port Richmond, Staten Island as part of an \$11.5 million project. Keeping our water distribution system in top shape is a crucial part of DEP's capital program, and I want to thank everyone from the Department of Design and Construction who continue to effectively manage our projects.

The Delaware Aqueduct is a true feat of engineering: started in 1937, it supplies the City with almost half of the one billion gallons of water we rely on each day. Though not a threat to our water supply, we've detected a leak in the aqueduct south of the Rondout Reservoir. Last week, I visited the Town of Wawarsing, where the tunnel leak may contribute to surface water problems faced by local residents. I visited with some residents and had a productive meeting with Town Supervisor **Leonard Distel** and his team about the challenges that some residents face and the impact of surface water issues generally in town. Afterwards, I joined Supervisor Distel and State Senator **John Bonacic** at a public meeting where I talked with local residents about their concerns and committed that DEP would work hard to fix the leak and address any problems that it may have caused. We also committed an additional \$150,000, and design services to implement stormwater management controls in Wawarsing—regardless of their source—as part of our ongoing partnership with the town and its residents. Our ultimate goal is to fix the leak, and I promised to return to Wawarsing within the next few months to explain what we currently know about the condition of the tunnel, and to outline our plan for a long term solution to

Focus on the Field



Joseph Scariotta, Supervisor of Bluebelt Maintenance, and **Jack Crawford**, Deputy Bluebelt Field Manager, might have the most yard work in New York City. Joseph and Jack both help take care of the 14,514 acres that comprise the Staten Island Bluebelts by supervising tree plantings, grass cutting, and other seasonal activities.

They both work with **James Rossi**, Bluebelt Field Manager, **Dana Gumb**, Chief, Bluebelt Unit, **James Garin**, Chief, Division of Capital Program Development and Planning, and **James Roberts**, the Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations.

Apart from their 'yard work,' Joseph and Jack supervise the maintenance of the Bluebelts, including the cleaning of cul-

verts and the installation of fencing, erosion controls, and trash. They've involved the local community by organizing clean-up days for Staten Islanders to help maintain the Bluebelts, which not only manage stormwater but also provide public space.

Joseph began his career with DEP in 1985, and Jack started in 1980. Jack is a 4th degree member of the Knights of Columbus, a member of the Elks, and he enjoys spending time with his eleven-year-old daughter. One of his favorite places in the Bluebelts is "Jack's Pond," which features an original Native American trail cutting through it. To clarify, this pond doesn't belong to Jack Crawford—it was named after King Jack, a large snapping turtle.

Joseph loves any part of the Bluebelt that offers a habitat to the different types of wildlife that live there. A native Staten Islander, Joseph loves sports, especially baseball, and is an avid Yankees fan. He's kept busy by his twin eleven-year old sons, and spends time with his wife Kim, who he's been married to for fifteen years.

DEP: Then & Now

Then: This is a culvert along the Richmond Creek Bluebelt before improvements. The stream channel is filled with sediment, and there is no freeboard (space between surface of stream and culvert) to allow water to pass through. This bottleneck in the stream led to frequent flooding during storms. (1997)



Now: The culvert was redesigned to abate flooding and to enhance aquatic habitat. Stones are placed in the streambed and through the culvert to provide habitat for aquatic life, and to attenuate the velocity of the water. Bluebelt field management staff keeps the culvert clear of sediment accumulations.



The architectural design is based on the style of construction used in 19th Century agrarian Staten Island. Local field stone walls and culverts take their cues from the past. The stone utilized is mostly Pennsylvania Colonial Field Stone (Quartzitic Sandstone).

Did You Know?

... that Bluebelt wetlands provide drainage for 14,000 acres on Staten Island, 36 percent of the Island's total land area? That's the equivalent of 16 Central Parks!

Milestones

Congratulations to BWT Assistant Commissioner **James Mueller** and his wife **Lisa** on the birth of their second child, **Jocelyn Hope**, on 6/22/10.

Best wishes to June retiree **Stanley Berman**, BWSO; and to July 2nd retiree, **Robert Gould**, BWS.

(These Bluebelts are So Green - continued)

Island Bluebelt System, is so important. The system is made up of streams, ponds, and other wetland features that drain about 14,514 acres, or about 36% of the land area of Staten Island. Another way of looking at it is by watershed, a geographic area that drains to a stream or water body. The Bluebelt system drains 15 watersheds at the southern end of Staten Island in addition to Richmond Creek, New Creek, South Beach, and Oakwood Beach Watersheds.

The Bluebelt System has been engineered down to the plants: native species like pickerelweed—planted throughout the Bluebelt—help filter the stormwater and absorb nitrogen and phosphorous, instead of letting it reach local water bodies. And, the Bluebelts also provide Staten Island with a native habitat for local wildlife and public green spaces.

The Bluebelt program has received national and international attention from stormwater professionals looking for a sustain-

able model for flood control. DEP has invested a lot in the Bluebelts, and plans on continuing that commitment. The Agency plans to spend more than \$22 million on developing and maintaining the current Bluebelt lands and also plans to spend about \$150 million to acquire new land in the next ten years, and approximately another \$105 million to construct more Bluebelts.

In addition to the Bluebelts, the Agency is very active with projects on Staten Island, including massive upgrades to the borough's water distribution and sewer infrastructure. Soon, DEP will partner with the Port Authority to construct a new \$250 million water tunnel to provide redundancy for the Staten Island water supply system. In total, DEP budgeted \$361 million for sewer-related projects from FY 2010 to FY 2014. Finally, DEP and the State Department of Environmental Conservation will invest \$258 million to rehabilitate the closed Brookfield Avenue Landfill.

Event Calendar:

Summer in the Square – Union Square Park - Thursdays (weekly through September 6) 10:00 am – 4:00 pm; Water On-the-Go Fountain: Union Square Park (southeast end), Corner of 14th Street and Broadway, across from Shoe Mania.

Greenmarket – Union Square Park - Fridays (weekly through September 6) 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; Water On-the-Go Fountain: Union Square Park (west side) at 15th Street, across from Staples.

Correction: Last week's feature article on EHS stated that the Agency committed over \$160 million to upgrading systems at its facilities; it should have stated the Agency invested over \$180 million overhauling safety procedures, training and improvements to facilities and equipment.

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