

Message From the Mayor



Dear Friends:

As today is my last day in office I wanted to take the opportunity to thank the nearly 6,000 men and women at DEP for the tremendously important work you do every day. There is nothing more essential to supporting our vibrant and growing city than providing a reliable supply of high quality drinking water, collecting and treating all of our wastewater to protect New York harbor, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous materials pollution.

Over the last 12 years we have made an historic investment of more than \$20 billion in our drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. We acquired land upstate to protect drinking water at its source, rehabilitated the dams that impound our reservoirs, opened the world's largest ultraviolet light disinfection facility, initiated the Water for the Future Program and began the important work to repair leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct, activated Stage 2 of City

Water Tunnel No. 3 in Manhattan, certified that all 14 wastewater treatment plants are providing secondary treatment, integrated cutting edge and community friendly green infrastructure into our efforts to reduce sewer overflows, and expanded sewers into neighborhoods that had been underserved for decades in southeast Queens and Staten Island. We also dramatically improved air quality by phasing out the dirtiest heating oil and adopted new asbestos and hazardous materials regulations. And we accomplished all this important work, and more, while keeping New York City water and sewer rates below the national average.

This critical work will ensure that New York City remains a world leader and continues to attract new residents seeking educational, business, and cultural opportunities for years to come. I'd like to thank you all for the opportunity to serve the city we love together. Best wishes for the New Year to you and your families.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bloomberg

[Click here](#) to see photos of the Mayor at DEP projects through the years.

Spotlight on Safety

'Tis the Season to Avoid Slips and Falls

DEP's work doesn't stop in the winter when snow and ice can create dangerous conditions. Avoiding slips and falls and related injuries requires employees to remain vigilant and proceed with caution.

Here are a few tips to help avoid injuries due to wintery conditions:

- Wear proper footwear with visible treads. Avoid wearing shoes with smooth soles.

- Be especially careful getting into and out of vehicles as shifting weight can cause imbalance and result in a fall.
- Walk on surfaces that have been treated with ice removal substances and avoid untreated routes.

For additional tips on walking safely on snow and ice visit [OSHA Winter Storms: Slips and Falls](#).

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



As the year draws to a close, it is an appropriate time to reflect on how effective the department has been in serving our customers and fulfilling our mission. In 2011 we launched our strategic plan, *Strategy 2011-2014*, which set forth 29 broad goals and 100 specific, far-reaching initiatives to clearly communicate the agency's top priorities and allow our customers to hold us accountable. In just three years, you all have helped us achieve or initiate 98 percent of our stated goals and because of that, we are well on our way to becoming the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation.

During this past year alone, DEP activated Stage 2 of City Water Tunnel No. 3, which now serves all of Manhattan and, in time, will allow Water Tunnel No. 1 to be taken offline for inspection and repair. We also began construction on shafts for the bypass tunnel that will facilitate the repair of the Delaware Aqueduct, expanded our network of Bluebelts, and installed the first of thousands of green infrastructure projects. By demonstrating our commitment to drinking water quality, we also secured an extension of our Filtration Avoidance Determination, which ensures that New Yorkers will continue to receive world class drinking water at an affordable price.

We have improved customer service by increasing online per-

mitting opportunities for businesses, engineers, and contractors, enrolled 53,000 customers in paperless billing, and more than 100,000 homeowners have already signed up for the Service Line Protection program. We have also substantially completed the installation of Automated Meter Reading devices, which give our more than 830,000 customers access to real time data about their water usage and have already saved property owners more than \$40 million through DEP's Leak Notification Program.

We have also demonstrated our commitment to safety through a new Environmental Health and Safety orientation program for contractors, and started an agency-wide forum to facilitate an ongoing discussion about safety and compliance. In addition, we have submitted legislation that will revamp the city's air code for the first time in nearly four decades, which will build upon the portfolio of initiatives that have already made New York City's air cleaner than it's been in more than 50 years.

As we look towards launching the strategic plan that will guide us in the years to come, I think it is important to note that DEP employees have played an invaluable role in shaping the path we will take. This year, I had the privilege of presenting to, and receiving feedback from, more than 50 percent of our workforce. Your ideas, suggestions, and input will be central to the development of *Strategy 2014-2017*, which will build upon the lessons learned from the current strategic plan as we continue our progress in customer service, worker safety, operations, and sustainability. I'd like to thank you all for your hard work and wish you and your loved ones a happy and healthy New Year.

Focus on the Field



Harilall, a Certified Safety Professional, inspects projects that have filed a notification and plans for asbestos removal with DEP to ensure that contractors are adhering to the regulations. He also responds to locations called into 311 where residents are concerned about the possible illegal disturbance of asbestos. As part of this work he has done inspections at Coop-City in the Bronx, the former Domino Sugar Factory in Brooklyn, and the Deutsche Bank Building in lower Manhattan.

“Many hazardous materials, including asbestos, are undetectable to humans so DEP plays an essential role in ensuring that they are handled properly and are not a threat to public health,” said Harilall.

New York City’s more than 8.4 million residents, tens of millions of annual visitors, and hundreds of thousands of daily commuters create a dense urban environment, which is part of what makes the city a vibrant and exciting place to live. It is also why it is essential to protect public health by reducing hazardous material pollution, including asbestos. DEP’s **Rajeshwar Harilall**, an Asbestos Emergency Response Supervisor with the Bureau of Environmental Compliance, has spent most of his professional life ensuring that the public is protected from just such threats.

During the 19th century’s industrial revolution in the United States, asbestos became a popular insulation material in buildings because of its strength, resistance to fire, and affordability. During the early to mid-20th century, studies began to show that prolonged exposure to asbestos could cause serious health complications. Now, as many of the buildings that were originally insulated with asbestos containing materials are being rehabilitated, DEP enforces strict regulations to ensure the safe removal of any hazardous substances.

Originally from Guyana, Harilall and his family immigrated to the United States in 2001 and settled in Queens. He attended York College where he received an undergraduate degree in environmental science and then earned a master’s degree in environmental occupational health and safety from Hunter College. After stints with the New York City Transit Authority and Department of Design and Construction where he worked on asbestos abatement, Harilall joined DEP in 2006.

As part of DEP’s Asbestos Control Program (ACP), which includes training and certification, technical review, and enforcement units,

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy there were many structures on Staten Island and the Rockaways that were so severely damaged they were slated for demolition. Harilall and ACP Enforcement staff, while inspecting the asbestos abatement procedures for these structures, discovered transite siding material and corrugated roofing shingles strewn throughout the Breezy Point neighborhood. These materials are known to often contain asbestos material, so bulk samples were taken—and laboratory analysis conducted at Lefrak headquarters confirmed that the siding and shingles contained non-friable asbestos material. Although they did not present an immediate health threat to the public, DEP applied for federal assistance to remove them from the neighborhood. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has since provided \$5 million to collect the more than 12,000 cubic yards of material in a safe manner and, since November, Harilall has been overseeing the cleanup effort, which is expected to be completed by the spring.

“Raj has been an exemplary employee and is committed to environmental health and safety,” said ACP Director **Steven Camaioire**. “He was part of the ACP team that identified the asbestos threat in Breezy Point following Hurricane Sandy and is now leading the important cleanup operation.”

Harilall still lives in Queens, now with his wife, and outside of the office he is active with his church and enjoys playing cricket in Flushing.

Helping Make Happy Holidays



Thanks to the generosity of DEP employees in the city and in the watersheds, hundreds of children in need received a toy to help make the holiday season a little brighter through the department’s Holiday Toy Drive. Nearly 500 toys were collected at Lefrak headquarters for Toys for Tots, while all watershed collections went to local charitable organizations. DEP’s Holiday Food Drive was also a great success. In-City donations to the Food Bank for New York City totaled 927 pounds, which is the equivalent of 773 meals for those less fortunate. Food collections at the various DEP facilities in the watershed went to local food pantries.

Warm wishes for a happy and healthy 2014!

(And it'll be even warmer in our new Official DEP Winter Coat, available online for \$85.)



NYC Employee Store
Environmental Protection

Newtown Creek Doll House



As part of the educational curriculum at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant’s Visitor Center, a green roof was recently installed on the DEP dollhouse. The dollhouse is a popular exhibit that tells the story of water use, water conservation, water infrastructure, wastewater, and now, stormwater management in New York City. The roof was conceived of by the Education Office, designed by the Office of

Green Infrastructure, and built by DEP’s carpenters. [Click here](#) to see more photos.

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