



Environmental Protection

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY

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A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Last Tuesday evening, **Commissioner Strickland** unveiled the city's first green infrastructure design standards at an event held at the Arsenal in Central Park. Department of Transportation Commissioner **Janette Sadik-Khan** as well as colleagues from the Parks Department and Department of Design and Construction were present for the occasion. The evening marked an important milestone in DEP's effort to expand the use of green infrastructure in the city because the new standards will expedite the design, approval and construction process.

After the launch of the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan in 2010, DEP's Office of Green Infrastructure, led by Assistant Commissioner **Magdi Farag**, worked with DOT, DDC, and DPR to design the Right-of-Way Bioswale



(ROWB). The *Type 1* ROWB is 20' x 5' and can manage an average of 250 cubic feet or 1870 gallons of stormwater that flows along the curb during a storm event. You can see a ROWB in action here [👉](#).

The first ROWBs were installed on 4th Avenue and Dean Street in Brooklyn last fall and are performing well. Design and construction is currently underway

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Email

The Office of Environmental, Health and Safety is committed to working with employees and management to implement the *Strategy 2011-2014* goal to "run the safest operations and capital program in the country with the best environmental compliance record of any large water and wastewater utility." We encourage open, frequent, and candid communication about EHS issues. Employees can send an email to report unsafe conditions, compliance violations, and other environmental, health, and safety issues. Employees are encouraged to take a few moments and send us an email to

help identify the areas where we might need to focus, or simply to offer a recommendation or insight. EHS Email is just one of the many options available to employees to report workplace environmental, safety and health issues, including directly reporting the concern to a supervisor, bureau EHS, OEHS, or the EHS Hotline at (800-897-0677).

Send an email to ehs@dep.nyc.gov [👉](#). You'll receive a prompt and confidential email response!

Show your commitment to improving environmental, health and safety conditions for everyone at DEP.

Commissioner's Corner

With so many properties damaged by Hurricane Sandy and residents displaced from their homes, we have been concerned about damage to private water lines and billing customers for water they did not use. To address this concern, last week **Mayor Bloomberg** announced that we will be temporarily suspending water bill payments for these customers. Residential and commercial properties that the Department of Buildings has tagged red, meaning they are damaged beyond repair or are in need of extensive structural repairs, as well as those that have been tagged yellow, meaning that they have less extensive but still significant damage, will not have to make a monthly water bill payment until June 1, 2013. We also will not impose standard fees for properties where water service has been disconnected from the city's water supply because of storm damage and will suspend interest fees and collection actions on affected properties that were delinquent before the storm.

The Automated Meter Reading program we invested in has allowed us to see which customers need our help and we will carefully review accounts so New Yorkers hardest hit by Sandy get an accurate bill and are not burdened by estimated charges. Thanks to Deputy Commissioner **Joe Singleton** and his team for their work on this project.

Last Friday we also lifted the recreational water body advisory that was put in place after Sandy hit the region. Our testing of New York Harbor water confirms that it is now safe. Thanks go to Deputy Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** and his BWT staff, as well as to **Kevin Donnelly** and BEDC staff, for their tremendous work to get all of our wastewater treatment plants back up and providing full secondary treatment in such a short amount of time. In fact, yesterday Mayor



Bloomberg visited the Oakwood Beach Treatment Plant on Staten Island to personally thank the staff for all of their hard work. I'd also like to recognize Chief of Marine Sciences **Beau Ranheim** and the entire section for their work in sampling the harbor water and ensuring that it is safe. Marine Sciences has also increased the frequency of sampling during the winter months which will give us a fuller picture of harbor water quality.

I'd also like to acknowledge the important work that BWS has resumed in the watershed to rehabilitate the Gilboa Dam. With DEC approval, we have begun to divert water from the Schoharie reservoir in order to access a part of the dam where we will install siphons that will help us better regulate the water level in the Reservoir and mitigate downstream flooding. We expect to have at least one siphon installed by the end of this three week project.

Finally, yesterday we delivered more than 400 artifacts that had been recovered from the Catskill/Delaware UV Treatment Facility site in Eastview to the Historical Society Serving Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow. The artifacts included tool making elements, cache blades and quartz projectile points dating back thousands of years to the terminal Archaic Era and early Woodland Period. Thanks to staff in BEDC, Legal and Communications for all their work.

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

Any calls to 311 with drinking water quality concerns typically get directed to Water Ecology Scientist **Ralph Riccardi**. A member of DEP's Distribution Water Quality Field Operations (DWQO), Riccardi earned an undergraduate degree from the College of Staten Island and an M.S. in Microbiology from Wagner College.

After receiving a drinking water quality concern, as Supervisor of Special Investigations Riccardi may have field scientists take local drinking water samples for analyses. He will then review the test results and contacts each caller to allay their concerns and share the results of the water quality tests. He also looks for patterns or clusters of complaints that may indicate a problem beyond water quality issues, such as routine disturbances within the distribution system.

Riccardi is a native Staten Islander and is passionate about New York's high quality tap water. As he puts it, "(W)hen I speak to callers, I like to re-instill their faith in our tap water and give people peace of mind that their drinking water supply is being kept safe and secure." Riccardi has been with DEP for six years and believes coordination with



staff members within his bureau, and with other bureaus, is a key component to ensuring high quality New York City tap water.

Virginia Murray, DWQO Deputy Chief explains, "Ralph is a valuable asset to our operations. He painstakingly responds to each water quality complaint. He knowledgeably and patiently explains water quality issues to consumers in a way they are able to understand, thereby easing consumers' apprehension. He is an exemplary employee and an all-around nice guy."

A lifelong New Yorker, Riccardi enjoys hiking in upstate New York, especially in the Gunks, short for the Shawangunk Mountains. He is also a recent newlywed, having married **Lucy DiSalvo** from BWT Marine Sciences.

Hurricane Sandy Relief Registry

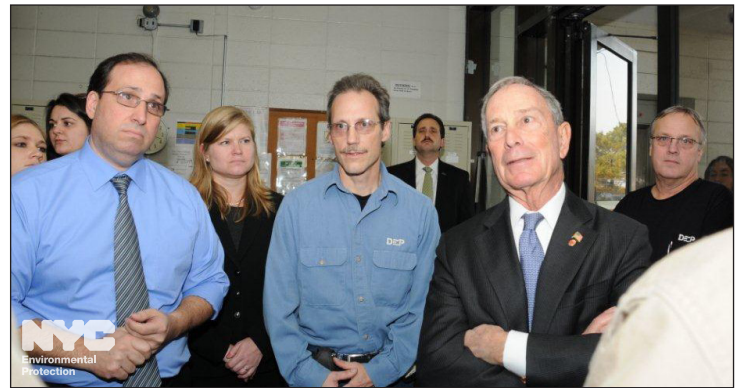
RELIEF REGISTRY "My family and I lived in Oakwood Beach and we lost everything. Our home was consumed under 10 feet of water and we waited on the roof for seven hours until we were rescued by boat. Thank you so much for creating this registry, it helps us and many others that have been greatly devastated by this Hurricane." — DEP Employee

Thank you for making the Hurricane Sandy Relief Registry a success! Since its November 9th launch, the Relief Registry has received 21 requests from employees severely affected by the storm. We are proud to share that over 50% of requests have been fulfilled including child car seats, a humidifier, winter coats, bed sheets, cat litter, silverware, and more. One employee even responded to a colleague's request to help remove wet sheetrock from a flooded basement! To everyone who responded to the Relief Registry, your generosity is truly appreciated.

For more information on the Relief Registry please click [here](#).

DEP DECEMBER BLOOD DRIVE: Lefrak: 3rd Floor Cafeteria 12/5 - 6, from 7:45 am to 1:30 pm; **Grahamsville Region Area:** 12/13, American Red Cross (Grahamsville Parking Lot), from 10 am to 3:00 pm; **Downsville Region Area:** 12/12, Downsville Fire Hall, from 9 am to 2:00 pm; **Kensico/Highland Regions - Sutton Park Area:** 12/13, Sutton Park, 2nd Floor, Large Training Room, from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

Mayor Bloomberg at Oakwood Beach



On Monday, **Mayor Bloomberg** visited the Oakwood Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant on Staten Island to thank the staff for their hard work before, during and after Hurricane Sandy. At the height of Sandy's storm surge, the plant itself became an island, as the surrounding community was completely inundated with seawater. Though the operations staff was stranded, they continued working throughout the night, dealing with extreme flows and debris that continually jammed the screening equipment. While some sections of Staten Island were badly damaged by Hurricane Sandy, the remarkable efforts of the Oakwood Beach Operations staff helped to reduce any health and environmental impacts by continuing to convey and treat approximately 80 million gallons of wastewater.

(A Tree Grows in Brooklyn... continued)



for more ROWBs and by the end of next year we will have added 250 of them around the city. Thousands will be installed over the next five years.

DEP will continue to engage the Green Infrastructure Task Force over the course of the program, as well as let our own design and construction contracts, in order to construct ROWBs in priority areas. These projects, in addition to retrofits to other city-owned properties, will help DEP achieve green infrastructure goals as outlined in the 2012 Amended

Consent Order. Visitors to the 19th Floor at Lefrak can also see a model ROWB to see how they function.

DEP staff should be recognized for the tremendous amount of work that has been put into our green infrastructure initiative—including Deputy Commissioner **Angela Licata**, Assistant Commissioner **Magdi Farag**, **Margot Walker**, **Mikelle Adgate**, **Kerry Lowe**, **Raymond Palmares**, **Tetyana Klymenko**, **Josh Landecker**, **Derick Tønning**, **Kathryn Prybylski** and **Linda Barghasheh**.

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