

From: [Strickland Jr., Carter H.](#)
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Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY PIPELINE EXTRA

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DEP Employees of the Month for August 2011

The Employee of the Month program recognizes DEP staff members that have exhibited outstanding personal effort, and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the people of New York City.

DEP is a great agency that delivers services that millions of New Yorkers depend on daily. Making good on that daily promise requires dedication and hard work of the nearly 6,000 employees of DEP. To nominate someone who has demonstrated uncommon dedication and excellence, fill out the nomination form with some basic information, such as the nominee's responsibilities, examples of extraordinary performance, and ways that they have set an example for others. The form is available on Pipeline, and you'll need to submit it by the tenth day following the end of the month. For more information, email Herb Roth at hroth@dep.nyc.gov.

The Employees of the Month for August, featured in this Weekly Pipeline Extra edition, were honored at a breakfast on September 27 with Commissioner Strickland, received a certificate, and had their names added to the Employee of the Month Board on the 3rd and 19th floors at Lefrak, and at the Kingston Office. These men and women set a standard for all of us to emulate and appreciate.



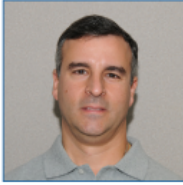
Water Supply - John Schwartz

John started working at DEP in August 1998 and currently serves as the Section Chief for Working Lands within the Watershed Protection Programs Directorate. He is responsible for overseeing and reporting on the city's watershed agricultural and forestry programs, including management of multi-million dollar contracts with DEP's partner, the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC). John is a consummate communicator, committed to the agency's and the city's missions. This spring and summer, John was involved in the coordination of the 2011 Watershed Boy Scout Trek in which a watershed troop hiked, biked and camped along the Catskill Aqueduct and Old Croton Aqueduct from the Ashokan Reservoir in Ulster County to the Central Park Reservoir in New York City during nine days in August. His effort and dedication was illustrated in the success of the event and demonstrated the city's commitment to community service and watershed education. John takes the extra steps needed to always project the most professional image for the city. As one teacher noted in a letter to the bureau "Mr. Schwartz is an excellent ambassador for the DEP. Thank you for sending such an excellent teacher."



Water and Sewer Operations - Mahsa Abnoosi

Mahsa began her career with DEP in September 1986 and for the last five years has been with the Permitting and Connections division. She is currently working on the division's online permitting initiative, which involves researching databases to determine an accurate record of known locations that have lead service lines so that they can be replaced in order to meet current standards and assure compliance with state regulations. She also played an important role in eliminating the tap card backlog. Mahsa is a very dedicated and highly motivated employee who received the Commissioner's Award in 2008 for her outstanding participation in the PERC situation in South East Queens. Mahsa recently graduated with a Masters in Art from Queens College while working full-time.



Wastewater Treatment - **Christopher Laudando**

Christopher began his career with DEP in April 1993 and serves as the Superintendent for Collections Facilities South, which operates and maintains DEP's wastewater pumping stations, Combined Sewer Overflow retention facilities, interceptors, and regulator chambers. During the Hurricane Irene emergency, Christopher was tasked with coordinating the emergency response efforts for the Operations Division. He and his team labored tirelessly for several consecutive days during August to both prepare for and work through Hurricane Irene. That effort included sandbagging our critical below ground stations, mobilizing generators and hydraulic pumps, and restoring service to various units that lost electrical power. He also monitored other incidents during the weekend and provided updates to the emergency management personnel and crews every two hours. After the storm ended, he was instrumental in quickly abating wastewater conveyance problems on Broad Channel and in Rockaway by coordinating with the sewer cleaning contractor as well as bureau electricians and machinists.



Customer Services - **Larry Walker**

Larry began his career with DEP in October 1994 and has worked in the Bureau of Customer Services (BCS) since that time. Larry was instrumental in providing support for expansion in office space and improving facilities, and is currently responsible for making sure all aspects of the bureau's operation runs smoothly. He supervises a number of key areas including budget, fleet and facilities administration.

During the recent earthquake, Larry performed his duties as the floor Fire Warden in an exemplary fashion. He knew exactly where to assemble, and led his floor to the evacuation site where he accounted for all the staff. Larry was a model warden in getting employees to and remaining at the site until such time as the "all clear" was given to return to the building. During a time when many were on edge and nervous, Larry was prepared, calm, cool and collected. His behavior serves as a model of how an emergency situation should be handled. During Hurricane Irene, Larry was among the first to volunteer to provide facility support for the call center staff that were being activated to serve as backup to 311.



Sustainability - **Tetyana Klymenko**

Tetyana began her career with DEP in January 2004. In her present assignment with the Office of Green Infrastructure (GI) she analyzes and determines the feasibility of incorporating different types of GI elements in capital and private sector projects citywide. Her extensive knowledge of the city's sewer system and drainage plans, and her proficiency in hydraulic design and drainage analysis, made her contributions in developing GI projects very valuable and beneficial.

In her previous assignment with the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, Tetyana designed major drainage plans citywide. To reduce combined sewer overflows into the waterways, she designed drainage plans for High Level storm sewers in combined sewer areas and for the replacement of combined sewer systems with separate sewer systems. Tetyana also tested hydraulic applications for the geographic information system sewer mapping project.

Commissioner's Award:



Water Supply - Thomas DeJohn

Tom serves as the Dam Safety Engineer for Western Operations and is responsible for the entire Dam Safety Program within the division. He is currently involved with the design and reconstruction of the Gilboa Dam and is responsible for preparing, distributing, and scheduling safety drills for the various Emergency Action Plans (EAP) with the different towns and counties located downstream of the agency's large dams.

During the height of Hurricane Irene, Tom was directed to the Gilboa Dam to observe the conditions. The strong winds and heavy rain made that difficult as the main road leading to the Dam was beginning to flood. At that point, it was agreed that the Gilboa Dam's Emergency Action Plan (EAP) had to be activated. With the activation being made, Tom again tried several routes to reach the dam. He approached from the northwest side and was able to arrive at the west end of the dam by walking three-quarters of a mile in stormy conditions. This allowed him to observe the condition of the dam and provide a detailed report to the Water Supply Control Center by two-way radio. Tom remained at the site and continued to provide updates throughout the day. His on-site live observations were invaluable and vital to the security of the surrounding area. Tom is extremely dedicated to his job and the safety and security of his co-workers and the residents of the communities surrounding the Gilboa Dam.



Police and Security - Captain Brian Handy

Due to the heavy rainfall caused by Hurricane Irene, the Gilboa Dam was quickly reaching its capacity to hold water. As conditions were rapidly deteriorating, the surrounding area, including the 1st Precinct, had to be evacuated. As a result, Captain Handy and the officers from the precinct established an emergency command post in a safe area on Route 990V as raging waters began spilling over the dam. The emergency command post remained operational for the duration of the storm and provided critical and essential updates to emergency responders, local residents and others. Due to the extensive damage in the area, a good number of roads became impassible and most forms of communication were lost. As Captain Handy and his officers were the only eyes and ears available to supply information, they saved countless lives and circumvented a catastrophic situation from developing.