

Getting Up to Speed



DEP Police Academy recruits trained last week on the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) in Kingston. EVOC is a 40-hour class and recruits are instructed in the legal aspects of law enforcement driving, non-emergency response driving, emergency response driving, and pursuit driving. During the EVOC course, recruits are required to complete practical exercises such as a timed-skill course, skid control methods, collision avoidance methods, and serpentine steering, as well as demonstrate vehicle dynamics and minimizing potential loss of vehicle control. There are currently 20 recruits in the 7-month academy and graduation will be held on Jan. 6, 2017.

Spotlight On Safety

Lightning Safety

Did you know that if you can hear thunder, or see an oncoming storm, this means that lightning is close enough to strike? Recently our area has experienced rain storms with lightning strikes. Often overlooked as an occupational hazard, lightning strikes can be a serious risk to those who work outdoors on or near tall objects, with or near metal scaffolding, and with metal equipment or machinery, utility lines, water, water pipes, and plumbing.

It is important to stay aware of daily forecasts to ensure workers will not be outside during a storm. If you see high winds, dark clouds, or distant thunder or lightning, you should take shelter in a building or a hard-topped vehicle with the

windows up. Do not return outside until 30 minutes after the thunder has stopped. If you are caught outside in a storm and cannot get inside, retreat to an area that is at a lower elevation than the surroundings. Keep clear of tall, isolated objects such as trees or flagpoles and stay away from bodies of water.

Remember, lightning victims DO NOT carry an electrical charge and are safe to touch. If a coworker is struck by lightning, they need urgent medical attention and you should call 911 immediately.

For more information, visit the OSHA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [Lightning Safety When Working Outdoors Fact Sheet](#).

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.

Special Guest Commissioner's Corner



This week's Commissioner's Corner was written by Deputy Commissioner for Sustainability **Angela Licata**

The continued development of innovative, cost-efficient programs that help to protect public health and the environment has made DEP a leader in our industry and I'd like to use this space to tell you about one of our most recent initiatives. Recently, two separate DEP programs have come together to help conserve water and improve the health of New York Harbor in a sustainable manner. Over the last few weeks we have begun a pilot program that utilizes recycled porcelain fixtures to help our curbside rain gardens absorb stormwater!

DEP is in the midst of a [\\$50 million project](#) to replace older, inefficient bathroom fixtures in 500 public school buildings across the city. The project is expected to conserve 4 million gallons of water every school day. Already, more than 10,000 outdated fixtures have been replaced with new, high-efficiency fixtures. Rather than send

those older porcelain fixtures to a landfill, as part of the pilot project, they have been cleaned, broken into small pieces and are being used to help ensure that curbside rain gardens can absorb up to 2,500 gallons of stormwater during each rainfall. Typically, during construction of a rain garden, after excavating to a depth of five feet, each site is backfilled with layers of stone and engineered soil. These layers contain void spaces that store the stormwater and promote infiltration. In the pilot project, the recycled porcelain is taking the place of the stone. By absorbing stormwater before it can drain into the combined sewer system, rain gardens help to reduce overflows and improve the health of local waterways. DEP will study the pilot rain gardens to determine how well the recycled porcelain performs while looking for other opportunities for their re-use. More photos are available [here](#).

I'd like to acknowledge the staff that have worked so hard to plan, design and execute this work, including **Pinar Balci** and **Vlada Kenniff** for having the determination to recycle the fixtures from the onset of the conservation project, **Ben Huff** for coordinating the work between agencies and private partners, **Phil Simmons** and his team for securing the necessary permits, and **Derriek Toning** and **Andres Garcia** for managing the work with the pilot rain gardens. Also thanks to **John McLaughlin** and **Jackie Chan** for their efforts in this endeavor.



New Boat Launch on the Pepacton



Since it opened on May 27th, the new boat launch site at Miller Hollow, along Pepacton Reservoir, has been a big hit with visitors coming from Downsville, Roscoe and other points to the south and west of the reservoir. DEP's recreational boating program led to 1,463 visits in 2015, an all-time record and the largest year-over-year increase in participation since it began in 2012. That increase was largely driven by the success of the rental program, which allows visitors to rent pre-cleaned and registered kayaks and canoes from 10 launch sites along the reservoirs. More information about the 2016 Recreational Boating Season can be found [here](#). Please [click here](#) to learn about Paddling the Catskills' Reservoirs.

Brown Bag Lunch Series

Come to Thursday's brown bag lunch event to hear from **Danielle Barrett** and **Kadian Outar**, from the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services, and **Walei Sabry**, from the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, as they celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Explore the life of differently abled people and learn how they navigate through everyday challenges. The event will be from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the Rego Center Community Room, located off Horace Harding Expressway, on 97th Street, near ALDI. To RSVP, email **Gloria Rodriguez** at Grodriquez@dep.nyc.gov.

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday 16 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter** and Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Anasthasia Chery, **Abraham Coen**, **Trevis Foster**, **Kion Job**, and **Subramonie Lachmenar** with BCS; **Julie Coyoc** with BPS; **Anna Hsu**, **Christopher Isaacs** and **Nitika Pandey** with BWSO; **Peter Mccalla**, **Randy Montgomery**, **Daniel Perkert**, **Cezar Sebastian Prescurie** and **Rajendra Rajkumar** with BWT; **Atiq Rehman** with CDBG; and **Melodie Heath** with FDC/FMC.

Canoe Tour of Newtown Creek



On July 20th, DEP employees joined members of the North Brooklyn Boat Club, The Newtown Creek Alliance, The Newtown Creek Community Advisory Group, and Queens Community Board 2 on a canoe ride in Newtown Creek. Led by the North Brooklyn Boat Club, the team traveled up the creek with stops in Dutch Kills and Whale Creek. DEP has numerous projects both underway, and being planned and designed, to help improve the health of Newtown Creek. This includes a \$30 million project to build four litter control devices within the sewers in the vicinity of the Creek and the construction of hundreds of curbside rain gardens. This year DEP will kick off a Long Term Control Plan for Newtown Creek which includes robust public participation. The tour was a terrific opportunity for DEP to hear directly from those who are on the Creek on a daily basis and to begin a dialogue that we hope will encourage even more public participation in the planning process. If you'd like to receive updates on public meetings related to DEP email ltp@dep.nyc.gov.

Operators Challenge Luncheon



Deputy Commissioner for Wastewater Treatment **Pam Elardo** hosted a celebratory luncheon last Wednesday for the two DEP teams that are advancing to the national Operators Challenge competition. Members of the **26th Ward Unflushables** and the **Jamaica Sludge Hustlers** will test their strengths and skills from September 24-28 at the Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference in New Orleans. Pictured standing in the back row are: Acting Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza**, **Howard Robinson**, **Anthony Petrone**, **Yu-Tung Chan**, **Pam Elardo**, **Robert Ferland**, **Ray Antenucci**, and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. Those in the front row include: **Ellis Watson**, **Dave Taylor**, **Robert Gaeta**, **Sal Scapelito**, and **Mike Leone**.

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