

Getting to Work



Last week, 48 new sewage treatment workers joined DEP and have begun an intense five-week orientation program that will cover personal protection equipment, fall protection, work zone safety, oxy-acetylene cutting, pipe soldering and fitting, working in confined spaces, rigging and moving heavy equipment with chains, slings, hoists and cranes, and the proper use of an aerial lift and fork lift.

William Abreu, Robert Aimetti, James Balducci, Michael Barabas, Patrick Byrne, Hector Cifuentes, Thomas Califano, Alfred Cannisi, Vito Cannizzaro, Raymond Dotzler Jr., Donald Esannason, Keith Foy, Jason

Giammarino, James Glenn, Nicholas Gluck, John Gore, Anthony Grandison, Robert Jackson, Wayne Jeffers, Eric Jones, Vladimir Khemlin, Vasillios Koulouris, Elias Langguth, David Langilotti, Vincent Lembo, Michael Lunnie, Andre Malacaria, Jeffrey Mallon, Jeffrey Mangieri, Matthew Panzarino, Patrick Presti, Ronald Pullum, Eddie Quevedo, Melvin Ramcharan, Luis Rivera, Mervin Robinson, Marra Salomon, Jay Sarfo, Frederick Seabrook, Pavel Shinkarev, Joseph Sorrentino, Joseph Sullivan, Isboset Tavarez, William Vassallo, Christopher Vedrin, Michael Villamena, Julian Wilder III and Konstantyn Yepishkin.

Spotlight on Safety

Lyme Disease

For those who work outside, it's important to be aware of the potential risk of Lyme disease, a bacterial infection that can be caused by the bite of an infected deer tick. If you find a tick on your person, remove it as soon as possible with fine-tipped tweezers. If you experience any symptoms such as a spreading rash at the site of the bite, itching, fever, or muscle pain you should consult a doctor. If left untreated, the disease can affect the skin, joints, nervous system and heart.

To help reduce the risk of Lyme disease:

- Wear light colored clothing and tuck pant legs into socks
- Apply insect repellent to clothing
- Continuously inspect skin and clothing so that a tick does not go unnoticed

For more information, visit the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website](#).

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

Paul Rush, DEP's Deputy Commissioner of BWS, is a guest commentator this week.

Summer is a great time to visit New York City's watershed, and in our continued effort to support outdoor recreation and tourism in the Catskills, DEP has significantly expanded the amount of City property within the watersheds that is open for recreation. There are now 122,205 acres open for recreation, including 88,313 acres of land and 33,892 acres of reservoirs. Of that, 59,211 acres of land are in public access areas that are open to hiking, and other forms of low-impact recreation without a [DEP access permit](#).

DEP has also created a popular recreational boating program that is now in its third full year and has already attracted close to 500 boaters this summer. For the second summer in a row, visitors can also take advantage of a boat rental program, administered by the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) that allows local businesses to store and rent recreational boats alongside the reservoirs. The convenience of rental boats attracted more than 300 boaters last year, supported local businesses with thousands of dollars in new revenue, and significantly improved access for visitors to the Catskills. The number of businesses participating in the rental program in 2014 has increased from seven to 11.

Visitors interested in hiking can check out the newly opened hiking trail at Palmer Hill, in Delaware County. The trail at Palmer Hill is the fifth hiking trail opened on City-owned land in the Catskills. The first four include the Shavertown Trail, a nature trail alongside a school in Conesville in Schoharie County, a walking and cross-country skiing trail near Windham in Greene



County, and trails in the Delaware County towns of Tompkins and Walton that were built by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference with help from Catskill Mountain Club.

Most City-owned reservoirs also offer excellent fishing opportunities for both warm-water species such as bass and cold-water species such as trout. It is common for many reservoirs to produce 4-5 pound bass and lake trout exceeding 15 pounds! In addition to City-owned reservoirs, fishing is also permitted on watershed lands that border excellent trout fishing streams such as the Batavia Kill, West Branch Delaware River, Esopus Creek, and many smaller tributaries.

In addition to supporting recreational opportunities, this summer, DEP is also hosting a series of public programs for watershed residents and visitors, including a hike on recently protected land, an educational walk through biologically diverse wetlands, and a fishing day for children. A complete list of events and tours is available [here](#).

Whatever your interests are, I encourage all of you to visit New York City's watershed and to take advantage of all of the outdoor recreation opportunities our reservoirs and lands have to offer.



Focus on the Field



Police vehicles couldn't patrol, trucks couldn't haul, and lawn mowers couldn't cut grass throughout DEP's East-of-Hudson watershed if it were not for **Mohamed Rahim**.

Rahim, who has worked at DEP since 1993, is the supervisor mechanic at the Cross River fleet maintenance garage in Westchester County. He and two other mechanics are in charge of the maintenance of 175 vehicles assigned to DEP police and the Bureau of Water Supply, along with dozens of pieces of maintenance equipment such as ride-on mowers and weed trimmers.

"Our main goal in this fleet garage is customer service," Rahim said. "It doesn't matter if it's a truck that hauls brush or the deputy commissioner's car, we treat all the vehicles equally and make sure they are operating safely."

To ensure the good working condition of those vehicles, Rahim and the two mechanics he supervises check each police vehicle every four months, and maintenance vehicles every six months. Each vehicle is checked according to a list of 30-50 different items. Along with routine oil changes, swapping out tires and brakes are among the most common tasks. All the while, Rahim performs these tasks with practically instant recall of the bin number for each light, bearing and other parts.

The importance of this maintenance cannot be overstated. Driving is an essential job function for DEP's 1,000 upstate employees because the watersheds that provide New York City's drinking water are so vast. (They comprise roughly 1.2 million acres of land.) For example, in 2013 Bureau of Water Supply employees upstate drove 3.2 million miles—the equivalent of more than six round trips to the moon.

"Mohamed's dedication to making sure our fleet vehicles are in good working order is an important part of operating the water supply every day," said **Ralph Marchitelli**, chief of eastern operations for the Bureau of Water Supply. "Whether its inspecting dams or gathering water samples, our employees need access to safe fleet vehicles to move around the watershed and perform their job duties."

Rahim first took an interest in cars while growing up in his native Guyana, in South America, where his father often tinkered with his Simca, a car manufactured in France. Rahim emigrated to the United States in 1979 and worked selling clothes for a short time in Times Square.

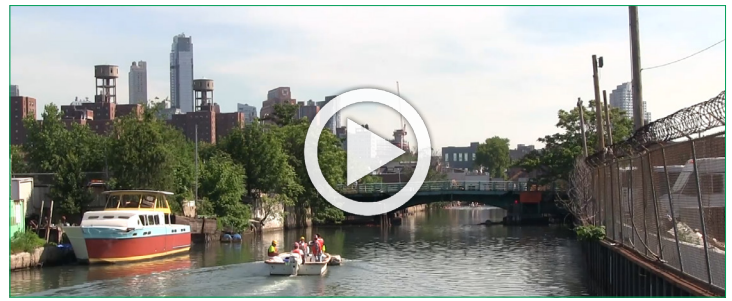
He then studied automotive repair at New York City Technical College and worked as a service manager at an auto parts store before joining DEP. Although he still lives in Queens, Rahim said he loves to work upstate among nature. In his free time, he is an avid hunter and angler.

Kudos Corner

Last month, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services hosted the NYC Employee Blood Drive Recognition Ceremony during which DEP received several awards, including the Commissioner's Cup for the top overall agency blood drive. DEP was also recognized for having one of the highest total donations as well as the highest increase in donations. Kudos to all DEP employees who participated!

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

Extra, Extra!



Click the photo to see a video about the ongoing \$190 million upgrades to the Gowanus Canal Flushing Tunnel and Pump Station, which have already resulted in healthier water in the Canal.

For those wishing to view the video outside of the office, you can watch it on our [YouTube channel](#).

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 21 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Director of Human Resources **Herb Roth**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Keremlyn Douglas, Yvette Miller, John R. Pol, Arsalan Rana, Fabian Rosario and Mark Sarju with BWT; **Kent Chin, Shafia Khan, Sonia Perry, David Syso and Damian Vergot** with BWSO; **Mark Fahd and Ryan P. Smith** with BWS; **Gillian Greenidge and Fatima Rosas** with FMC; **Cecil McMaster and Lisa Stephenson** with OIT; **Yi-Hua Chen** with ACCO; **Yesenia Ruiz** with BCS; **Drew Sweet** with BEDC; and **Gordon H. Yuen** with BPA.

Hard Hat Required



Last week, a group of more than 30 students participating in DEP's summer internship program toured the Catskill/Delaware Ultraviolet Disinfection Facility in Valhalla, NY. Chief of Maintenance, Ed Hughes (pictured) led the tour of the 270,000 square-foot facility that is designed to treat more than 2 billion gallons of water each day. To learn about the broad scope of work done by the agency, DEP's summer interns have also visited the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and a Bluebelt on Staten Island. [Click here](#) to see more photos.