

## Safety Gets More Efficient



Two new functional areas of the Office of Environmental, Health and Safety (OEHS) have been established—DEP Training and Development and EHS Communications—to take advantage of the resources, best practices, expertise, and methodologies that were formally in two separate bureau offices. The consolidation and restructuring will enhance the quality and consistency of these programs, including unified management oversight, elimination of redundancies and cost reduc-

tion, all critical elements of DEP's strategic plan.

Two existing divisions—the BHRA Office of Training and Development and the OEHS Training Division—are now combined into one training and development division. This newly formed division is responsible for the coordination, development and administration of central training functions, including professional development, policy and EHS related training. It

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## Spotlight on Safety

### Communication is Key in Any Incident

DEP operates in a very dynamic environment and from time to time, mishaps occur. DEP continues to succeed in reducing the number of incidents, but when they do occur, it is critically important to effectively and accurately communicate related facts and actions to DEP employees, as well as public stakeholders. Presenting accurate, real-time EHS information related to incidents is a challenging but critical responsibility for any DEP manager.

DEP's Office of Environmental, Health and Safety has developed and implemented an agency-wide Incident Communication Guideline and Form that enables management to communicate the back-

ground, facts, immediate actions taken, investigation progress, and final resolution of incidents. The use of a uniform approach also helps prevent spread of misinformation.

The DEP Incident Communication template is used for incidents that are major, unusual or noteworthy, and where accurate and timely communication of information to employees is critical. This process enables employees to get a look into management's response to emergency situations, and also allows them to see the level of commitment that is applied to resolving employees' health and safety matters. To read the full article, [click here](#).

## Commissioner's Corner

On Thursday, I travelled to Albany to testify in front of the New York State Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation, chaired by Assemblyman **Robert Sweeney**, about the State's Revised Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement on natural gas development through the use of hydrofracking. To begin with, the revised draft took a number of concrete steps to better protect New York City's unfiltered drinking water supply, and the State Department of Environmental Conservation should be commended for banning fracking within our Delaware and Catskill watersheds. With that main issue addressed, there are several smaller issues that are a concern. Perhaps the biggest is protecting our water supply infrastructure, much of which is not within the watershed. The revised draft calls for a 1,000-foot buffer zone around our infrastructure. Our position is that the buffer, whatever the distance ends up being, should be measured from wherever the drilling takes place since drilling legs extend out from the actual well pad. The good news is that DEC agreed with that assessment and will incorporate it into the final impact statement. We are also concerned about the potential for microseismic events that can occur either from the fracturing of the rock or from injection of subsurface fluids and their impact on our tunnels that have unreinforced concrete liners. To study this issue further, we are in the process of retaining a nationally renowned seismology expert, and we will be submitting that information, including our final position on what the buffer should properly be, to the state before the public comment period ends on December 12.

While upstate, I took the opportunity to visit the BWS Kingston Water Quality Laboratory and the Ashokan Reservoir with all of its related operating facilities. The Kingston Laboratory serves as the primary water quality monitoring laboratory for the West-of-Hudson watershed, and conducts thousands of water quality tests each year on streams, reservoirs and aqueduct intakes in the watershed. The team of 65 water quality scientists—led Chief of Watershed Water Quality Operations **Lori Emery** and Section Chief of Kingston Operations **Kirsten Lewis Asklidsen** along with team



members **Andy Bader, Michelle Rodden, Allison Bennett, and Lisa Blancero McDonald**—have been busy lately performing enhanced monitoring in the wake of Hurricane Irene. The results of both field and laboratory tests help determine how to safely operate the water supply, especially when we experience elevated turbidity in some of our reservoirs. DEP's *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* testing, done exclusively in Kingston, has been important to verify that the storm did not cause an increase in these pathogens, and I was thrilled to see firsthand a *Cryptosporidium* oocyst under the microscope in the Pathogen Laboratory darkroom. It's also worth noting that we do thousands of tests in-city as well, and samples following the storms indicated that there were no public health impacts as a result.

Next, I stopped by the Ashokan Reservoir, part of the Catskill system that supplies nearly 50% of the city's daily drinking water needs, to see how it operates and witness some of the post-storm impacts up close. Like the Kingston lab, the operators at Ashokan have done a commendable job despite very difficult circumstance. Acting Shokan Regional Manager **Mike Hinchey** directed all Ashokan operations out of the Ben Nesin Building even though power was out for three weeks and they were forced to rely on back up generators. At Driftwood Cove, where deposits of broken trees and other debris accumulate following storms, Remediation Specialist **Ed Walters** showed how DEP and contractors are removing the most driftwood ever seen in the reservoir, a job that will take months before the debris is all cleared. The work that they are doing is critical and I thank them, and the other BWS employees I spoke with—**Tina Johnstone, John Vickers, Jeff Helmuth** and **Pat Lambert**—for their unparalleled dedication.

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




When she began at DEP more than 20 years ago, it was unlikely that **Doreen Johann**, Director of EHS Program Development and Training, expected that Rodney Dangerfield would be calling to question his drinking water quality. Yet during her time at BWS, that was one of her memorable moments. “He was very appreciative to the city and was very interested in the water,” said Doreen. “It shows that no matter who you are, you appreciate the city’s water and that it’s clean and it tastes good.”

Doreen is accustomed to working with a broad spectrum of issues and circumstances. Her background in marine biology and environmental and occupational health led her into diverse work experiences, which included the Osborn Laboratories at the New York Aquarium, Forbes Magazine, New York University and The Rockefeller University.


Today, Doreen oversees the Compliance Support and Training divisions at the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, which brings daily challenges and productive results. As compliance support manager, Doreen develops programs, conducts site visits, and provides guidance into regulatory mandates and technical needs. In her role overseeing training for the agency—which can involve managing required courses through the Training Tracking and Reporting System that Doreen played a key role in developing—she looks to accommodate different learning styles to make training more efficient. The training division is continually using new and emerging technology to develop training modules. In addition to serving as an EEO liaison, she also serves on the Upstate and Downstate Health and Safety Labor Management Committees, where she facilitates communication between DEP management and union members to encourage cooperative working relationships while ensuring employee safety.

In her spare time, Doreen enjoys competitive slot car racing, writing, scientific illustration, cooking, golf, singing and songwriting. Her daily workflow may not always include chance encounters with the likes of Rodney Dangerfield, but even after 24 years at DEP she continues to learn something new every day.

## Press Box

“New York City stepped up to the plate and did the right thing when it was under no legal obligation to do so. In years not-so-long gone by, it very well might not have done so. We take that as an act of good faith about what, for better or worse, will be our continuing relationship, come hell or high water. Thank you, New York City.” – Daily Freeman editorial on NYC’s assistance following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee 

**FAIRED WELL:** On Thursday, October 6, a Health and Wellness Fair was held in the Lefrak cafeteria. The fair was sponsored by the DEP Labor-Management Quality of Work Life Program. Nineteen exhibitors from a variety of health-related fields were in attendance. A sample of some of the topics dealt with podiatry screening, glaucoma testing, scleroderma testing, and fire safety. More than 420 employees passed through the fair and were able to take advantage of the wealth of information provided.

**REGISTER TO VOTE:** October 14 is the last day to register to vote in the general election. For more information, click here 

## Kudos Corner

**Patrick Hendricks** is the DEP recipient of the Mayor’s Excellence in Customer Service Award, given each year as part of Customer Service Week to members of various city agencies who have provided the highest quality of customer service to the public. Patrick has worked in the Bureau of Customer Services for the last seven years and was recently promoted to the position of Director of Collections, where he oversaw 20 community outreach meetings in just the past year.

### (Safety Gets More Efficient... continued)

will operate under the leadership of **Doreen Johann**, Director of Program Development and Training. Doreen will work closely with all bureau training coordinators and administrators to better align the agency’s strategic plan goals to the training function and to provide for unified oversight of the agency’s training. The new division consists of three areas:

Training systems administration will be headed up by **Roberto Rios**, and will be responsible for the Training Tracking and Reporting System (TTRS), the agency’s new enterprise-wide training administration system. Robert has a wealth of private sector computer systems management experience, and will be working with the bureaus to insure that TTRS becomes fully functional and is integrated into the training workflows and reporting processes. He will be assisted by **Kevin Moore**.

The remote learning group will be headed by **Sabrina Sjaastad**, with support from **Riyu Azumaya** and **Jennifer Bishop**. This group will be responsible for integrating computer and web-based training, webinars, remote classroom learning, and other new and emerging technologies into training at DEP.

Training development and administration will be headed by **Lorna Lettman**, with assistance from **Martin Dolgow** and **Brenda Thompson**. Their responsibilities include training program development, curriculum development, training and communications materials, graphics and presentations, training coordination, classroom instruction, professional continuing education programs, DCAS training liaison, and other administrative duties.

Additionally, **Michael Bartlett** has been appointed Director of EHS Communications, reporting directly to OEHS Assistant Commissioner **Persis Luke**. Michael will be responsible for designing a communications program to promote and establish EHS awareness, compliance, and program integration. His responsibilities include Spotlight on Safety, EHS Matters, employee communication and recognition programs, EHS poster campaigns, EHS employee surveys, and assisting OEHS and bureau EHS directors with the preparation of incident communications, or other EHS alerts. Jennifer Bishop will assist with the graphics design of the publications and communications media.

## Did You Know

...that the completion of the Croton Aqueduct was commemorated on October 14, 1842? The occasion was marked by new fountains in Union Square and City Hall Park and a seven mile parade from the Battery in lower Manhattan up Broadway to Union Square and back to City Hall. People drank “Croton cocktails” of water and lemon. Seventy-five years later on October 14, 1917 the city celebrated the completion of the Catskill Aqueduct in Central Park where a jet fountain was erected in the reservoir to symbolize the great pressure of the new aqueduct. The jet has been re-installed and as of last weekend was still on.

## Milestones

Congratulations to **Deana Rodriguez**, BCS, and **Giovanni Pagan** on the birth of their son **Julian Giovanni**, on 9/28. All are doing well.

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov)** 