

Commissioner's Corner



Each day, DEP provides more than one billion gallons of water through 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels, and aqueducts, and manages nearly 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater traveling through 7,500 miles of sewers to our treatment plants. Our projects are typically large in scale, with far-reaching effects, and require years of planning and construction. This means we must be thinking about what will happen 25, 50, and even 100 years into the

future. Some long term and emerging trends have become clearer over the last few years, and they require us to take a step back and evaluate how we accomplish our mission.

Most important, the challenges surrounding stormwater management are coming sharply into focus. Two key factors are leading us to recognize the increased importance of this issue in coming years:

- federal and state regulations becoming ever more stringent and beginning to reach into stormwater management
- the very real threats posed by climate change

To develop effective plans and implement new solutions we need more structured partnering, some reconfiguration of existing responsibilities, and the development of new capabilities, all focusing on stormwater management. Below I have outlined the first steps, developed with senior staff, toward making the changes needed to confront the challenges posed by stormwater management. These include:

The Bureaus of Sustainability and Legal Affairs (BLA)

Sustainability and BLA will jointly develop a 20+ year look-ahead at climate change impacts and regulatory requirements. They will work closely with the other bureaus and offer expert input to determine the best short- and long-term responses to these challenges.

The Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO)

BWSO will be most directly affected by the intensified focus on stormwater and, along with the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT), will operate and maintain what is ultimately built. BWSO will significantly expand its work on stormwater planning and management, and will accelerate the build-out of missing pieces of stormwater infrastructure.

The Bureau of Water Supply (BWS)

BWS will assume responsibility for Hillview Reservoir, Jerome Park Reservoir, and the Croton Filtration Plant to consolidate expertise around drinking water monitoring and treatment within one bureau. This will also facilitate planning and negotiating the next Filtration Avoidance Determination.



The Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction (BEDC)

BEDC will create a specialized unit dedicated to long-term planning for stormwater management. The unit will integrate Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) work with other stormwater planning.

I am confident that these changes strengthen our response to the emerging challenges and catalyze new thinking and partnerships across the agency. A Working Group, from across the department, is also being convened to address any issues that arise as we implement these initiatives.

Each of you plays an important role in the success of our collective effort to protect public health and the environment—both today and well into the future. I thank you all in advance for your support and cooperation.

Spotlight on Safety

Enjoy a Safe Holiday Season

The holiday season is traditionally a festive time of year, but it is also a time to take certain precautions. Statistics show that the number of accidental fires and electrical incidents increase during the winter holiday season. Never overload circuits or run wires beneath carpets, furniture, or out of windows and never leave space heaters unattended while in use. Check and clean chimneys and fireplaces at least once a year. Extinguish fireplaces and candles when you go to sleep or leave the house. And never use candles near trees or other flammable items.

In addition, remember that the roadways will be busy and it is especially important to exercise safe driving. According to the National Safety Council (NSC), during the 2013 Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays, a total of 791 people died in automobile accidents. Avoid distracted driving by keeping your cell phone out of sight, ensure everyone in the vehicle is wearing a seatbelt, and never drive under the influence of alcohol. For many more helpful tips to ensure a safe holiday season, visit [NSC's Holiday Safety Page](#).

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.



Preserving Water Supply History

On December 9, DEP donated an original valve actuator from the New Croton Dam to be placed on permanent display at a museum that will open next year in Westchester County. The cast-iron actuator was installed sometime during construction of the dam from 1892-1906, where it remained until it was removed last year as part of a rehabilitation and upgrade project. The actuator was used to operate a 48-inch valve that released water from Croton Reservoir downstream into the Croton River.



The 1,000-pound actuator was donated to the nonprofit Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The two organizations are collaborating to open the Keeper's House Visitors and Education Center in Dobbs Ferry early next year. The center will educate visitors about New York City's water supply system, the Old Croton Aqueduct, and the 26.2-mile linear park that now runs on land atop of the aqueduct.

The actuator was one of three inside New Croton Dam. It was manually operated by two hand cranks that spun gears and other mechanisms to close and open each valve. The old actuators were removed from the dam as part of a project to replace them with more modern equipment that will have the capability to be operated remotely in the future. That project will be completed next year. The old actuators were planned to be recycled as scrap metal before a historian from Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct requested the donation of one to the museum.

The actuator was being stored in Croton Lake Gate House until it was retrieved last week by workers from State Parks. It was taken to a state facility near Albany to be cleaned and restored before it is displayed on the grounds outside the museum.

The museum itself is also part of New York City's water supply history. It's being built inside a former keeper's house along the Old Croton Aqueduct. The City built at least four keeper's houses along the path of the original aqueduct in the mid-1800s. Only two remain, including the one in Dobbs Ferry and a second in Ossining that was moved from its original location when it became a private residence. The keeper's houses were occupied by practical masons who worked for the City's water system. The masons generally had three jobs: they trimmed trees and maintained land around the aqueduct, secured the aqueduct right-of-way from encroachment, and sometimes were called upon to use their masonry

skills to repair leaks inside the brick aqueduct. The brick keeper's house in Dobbs Ferry was built in 1857; it was occupied until 1962. The other keeper's houses were torn down.

State Parks is completing a \$1.1 million project to refurbish the keeper's house. When finished, the museum and learning center will include video displays, artifacts, and hands-on activities for children to learn about the origins of their drinking water. Content for the center is being developed in partnership with DEP and Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct, a local nonprofit that includes 500 members. Much of the content will focus on the Old Croton Aqueduct and the portions of New York City's original upland water supply system in Westchester and Putnam counties, which were constructed beginning in 1837.

The Old Croton Aqueduct ceased carrying drinking water to New York City in 1955. Since then, only the New Croton Aqueduct has delivered water from the reservoirs of the Croton System. In 1968, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation purchased 26.2 miles of the original 41-mile Old Croton Aqueduct from New York City. Presently, Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park is a linear park that runs on land atop the aqueduct, from Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx to New Croton Dam. The popular recreation path winds through urban centers and small communities. It also runs along numerous historical sites, preserves, and the site of the new museum at the keeper's house. While primarily for walking and running, parts of the trail are suitable for horseback riding, biking, bird watching, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct also gives regular lectures and tours along the path, and inside one portion of the old aqueduct itself.

Additional Information:

- [The Keeper's House Visitors and Education Center](#)
- [Linear park atop the Old Croton Aqueduct](#)
- [Donated valve actuator photos](#)

Celebrating 100 Years



Members of the DEP Police recently joined retired Lieutenant **Albert 'Hick' Murphy** (seated), along with his friends and family, to celebrate his 100th birthday in Walton, NY. Murphy served with the police from 1948 to 1976. Pictured with Lieutenant Murphy from left to right are Officer **Dan Wahl**, Officer **Steve Davis**, and Sergeant **John Carron**.

Time is Running Out!

Holiday Toy Drive: This is the last week that toys are being accepted for DEP's holiday toy drives in the watershed. [Click here](#) for information on where and what is being collected at the watershed sites.

Blood Drive: DEP is hosting one final Blood Drive at the Neversink Firehouse for the Grahamsville Region Area on December 17 from 10am to 3pm. [Click here](#) for more information.

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday 26 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from First Deputy Commissioner **Steve Lawitts**, and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Vanessa Soto with ACCO; **Cleve Voisin** and **Eva Zhen** with BCS; **Omeshwar Poonai** with BEC; **Samantha Baer**, **Yves Kedelina**, **Kisha Miller**, **Raisa Oborotistova**, and **Anthony Ukubiwe** with BLA; **Joshua Cruz**, **Ross Fratto**, **Justin Hartman**, and **Patrick Lacy** with BWS; **Mahmoud Abdeldayem**, **Tony Chen**, **Daquan Johnson** (not pictured), **Bonita Lee**, **Gabriel Sanchez**, **Zach Shultz**, and **Korab Strikcani** with BWSO; **Crystal Carr**, **Marzieh Farzamfar**, and **Haider Hussain** with Executive; **William Barrett** and **Michael Powers** with FMC; and **Abid Hazari** with OIT.

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