

Blue State NY Gets Conservative With Water

As the planning continues for the repair of the Delaware Aqueduct, with ground breaking on the bypass tunnel scheduled for next year, the companion but equally important water conservation program is moving full steam ahead. The Delaware Aqueduct carries approximately 50% of the city's daily drinking water and when it is shut down for repairs in 2020 it is imperative that the remaining water supply is used wisely and conservatively. The Water Demand Management Group, led by Director **Vlada Kenniff** and housed within the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis, has been tasked with identifying and implementing cost effective conservation measures that will reduce city-wide water



demand by 5%, or 50 million gallons a day.

Kenniff had been a DEP intern, and she joined the agency full time in 2005 after earning her Master's in City and Regional Planning from Pratt. Her group had been analyzing water use data gleaned from Automated Meter Readers for general agency planning purposes until it became clear that the Delaware Aqueduct would need to

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Spotlight on Safety

Legionnaire's Disease

Legionnaire's disease is a type of pneumonia that is caused by high concentrations of legionella bacteria in water. The bacteria can survive for many months in a wet environment, especially in warm water. Transmission is not spread by person-to-person contact, but by inhaling or ingesting the legionella microbes which may be present in mists and aerosols created from the contaminated water. Water fountains, misters, showers, heat exchangers, building cooling towers and whirlpool spas are all capable of spreading legionella if they are not properly maintained and/or disinfected prior to and during operation.

Outbreaks of Legionnaire's disease

are sometimes the result of improper maintenance of cooling towers in air conditioning systems; or when a system has been dormant and is then started up without proper disinfection. The legionella bacteria grow in stagnant water and are dispersed as droplets that are expelled by the systems during operation or start up. DEP personnel who work with HVAC equipment should always follow best management practices and industry standards. The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Guideline 12-2000 provides information on minimizing the risk of Legionellosis.

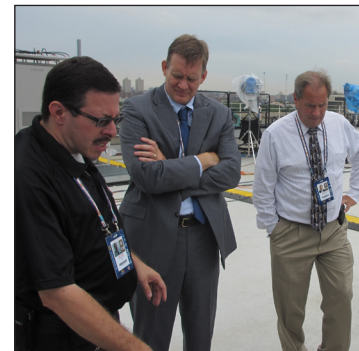
For additional information visit OSHA.gov.

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

Today we mark the 11th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks with sobriety and remembrance of all those who were lost. As our city, our nation, and the global community responded to this terrible event, DEP staff rushed headlong into danger to repair critical water infrastructure while also monitoring air quality and simultaneously ensuring the security of our water supply upstate. Today, let's be sure we take the time to thank all the New York City workers who make us proud—both on that day 11 years ago and every day that they're on the job, keeping New York City strong and a great place to live. We must never forget those who were lost on that terrible day, and must always remember the sacrifice of those who helped us respond and recover.

In many ways, our work has changed because of 9/11. For example, our HazMat teams monitor and protect air quality to detect the presence of potentially dangerous materials, a role of critical importance that only increases when the city plays host to international events. Last week's 2012 US Open was just such an event, as Queens became the epicenter of the sports world for millions of tennis fans around the world and DEP's Division of Emergency Response and Technical Assessment (DERTA) deployed staff and monitoring equipment to ensure air quality. I reviewed our monitoring stations, mobile Haz Mat labs, and other cutting-edge equipment at the Billie Jean King Tennis Center at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park last Thursday, where DERTA Deputy Director **Harry Mayer** and Deputy Commissioner **Kevin McBride** provided an overview of the important work of



DEP staff to help ensure the security of visitors. New York always rises to the occasion when the spotlight is brightest, and DEP is very proud to play a role in protecting the millions of visitors who came to safely enjoy the US Open.

At DEP, our core mission is to bring fresh, clean, delicious and nutritious drinking water to more than nine million residents every day. We are proud to say that this summer, thanks to the Water-On-the-Go program, NYC Water was enjoyed by more people than ever: over 500,000 people visited Water-On-the-Go drinking fountains this summer, more than doubling the number of visitors from 2011. For the third straight year, we brought free portable water fountains to outdoor locations throughout the five boroughs, tripling the number of locations from 2011. The quality of NYC Water is a result of rigorous watershed protection programs, and is verified by more than 1,000 daily tests taken from nearly 1,000 sampling locations throughout the city. This is in addition to the 225,000 tests performed annually throughout the watershed. Across all of our bureaus, DEP staff works diligently every day to bring this precious resource to New Yorkers, and we can all take pride in the success of the 2012 Water-On-the-Go program. Major thanks and congratulations are due to the BCIA staff who administered the program, as well as BWSO field operations teams who connected the fountains to fire hydrants every morning. It should be noted that this program was not just enjoyed by those of us who walk on two legs—NYC Water drinking bowls at fountains served more than 3,200 dogs, a few cats, some pigeons, and even a horse.



Focus on the Field

Lauren Competello began her career at DEP in 2004, as an intern working on the Delaware Aqueduct Dewatering Shaft Rehabilitation Project. After undertaking various projects with increasing responsibility, she is now a Project Manager for the construction of the Croton Filtration Plant – the first filtration plant for the NYC water supply system. When asked about what her job entails, she replied simply: “Anything you can think of,” describing her role as a problem solver. Croton is the largest project she has ever worked on, and with that comes many challenges and responsibilities.

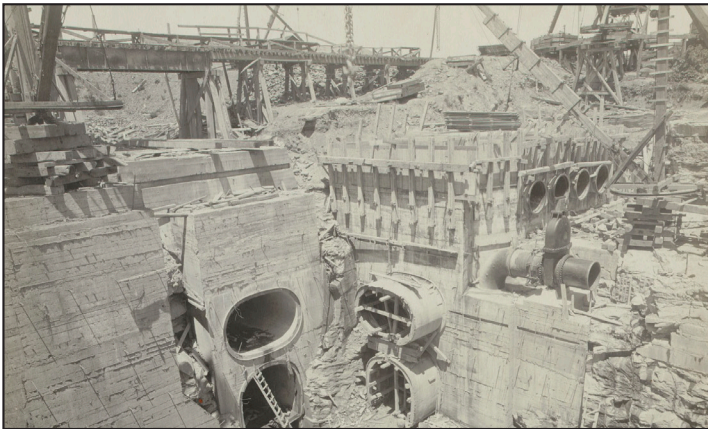


produced significant savings for the agency.



It is when presented with obstacles like this that she is constantly reminded of how fortunate she is “to be on the Croton team with such a group of smart and dedicated people.” Competello’s understanding of the value of teamwork is always on display, whether she is managing a construction project or coaching youth basketball in her spare time. A voracious reader and a brown belt in Judo, she “couldn’t imagine being happier anywhere else.” While a lot has been written about Bluebelts at DEP, Competello has proven herself to be a black belt caliber manager.

One of those challenges involved the design of a force main to dispose of residuals generated by the filtration process, which would run seven and a half miles from the Croton site to the Hunts Point Wastewater Treatment Plant. As it became apparent that implementing the design would be more difficult than expected, Competello worked with BWSO and BWT and determined that the surrounding sewage system had enough capacity to handle an increase in volume. This analysis, which eliminated the need for the force main,

Out of the Archives



This photo was taken on June 18, 1912 and shows the lower gate chamber of the Catskill Aqueduct Headworks, a labyrinth of subsurface tunnels and chambers equipped with valves, sluice gates, and operating equipment. They release water from the Ashokan Reservoir into the Catskill Aqueduct and can route millions of gallons of water each day.

DEP SEPTEMBER BLOOD DRIVE: **Lefrak:** 9/11–9/13, from 7:45 am to 1:30 pm in the 3rd Floor Cafeteria in the high-rise building; **Downsville:** 9/12, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Downsville Fire Department; **Kingston:** 9/10-9/17, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm at 51 Albany Avenue; **Sutton Park:** 9/13 from 8:30 am to 2:15 pm in the 2nd Floor - Large Training Room; **Grahamsville:** 9/26 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Grahamsville Parking Lot. Please click  to see the email from the Commissioner and  for the list of blood drive captains.

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be shut down. Beginning in 2011, the Municipal Water Efficiency Program was born and the group trained their focus on planning to reduce demand. Coincidentally, one of their first targets turned out to be the city itself. “City government is one of our largest consumers so it was natural that the city should take a leading role in reducing demand,” said Kenniff. After analyzing years of data and modeling possible conservation measures, Kenniff, her Deputy Director **Grace Lee** and Director of Outreach **Chris Villari** began to approach sustainability staff at city agencies with proposals for projects that would lower the amount of water they use. “Once we laid out the gravity of the issue and presented well thought through proposals, the agencies were quite anxious to partner with us,” Kenniff noted.

One of the first projects began its pilot trial in August when Commissioner **Strickland** was joined by Parks Commissioner **Adrian Benepe** at the Glendale Playground in Queens. The commissioners announced that the agencies were partnering to install timers on the spray showers located within city playgrounds that will shut off the water after two minutes of use. Without timers and reactivation buttons, playground showers use approximately 7,000 gallons of water per day. Timers will reduce that consumption by 80%, or approximately 5,600 gallons per day. Following the current pilot phase, 23 playgrounds will be upgraded with timers next summer and a total of 400 will be completed by 2017. This initia-

tive is projected to reduce city-wide water consumption by 1.5 million gallons per day.

The group is preparing to announce partnerships with the Department of Education, the New York City Housing Authority and the City University of New York to replace older toilets with new low-flush models. It has long been recognized that older models of toilets use more water than is necessary and replacing them with low-flow models will yield a significant water savings. The team is also looking at the possibility of re-viving the effective toilet rebate program for private residences. **Warren Liebold** of BCS worked on the program in the 1990’s and has been an integral part of the planning and evaluation of the current program.

And of course the team is also looking at ways to conserve water here at DEP. Preliminary discussions with BWT have indicated that there may be room to reduce demand in the water treatment process, a change that would also reduce energy use.

Angela Licata, Deputy Commissioner for Sustainability, said that “the Water Demand Management Group’s work is essential to the success of the Water for the Future program and Kenniff and her team have already established some significant partnerships that will reduce demand. Using less water will be a benefit to the whole agency as it will also create excess capacity in our sewer lines which will help reduce local flooding while easing stress on our treatment plants.”

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