

Kudos Corner



Last month, **Mayor Bloomberg** recognized **Mike Moran**, **Patrick Hendricks**, and **Rhonda Castro** (all with the Bureau of Customer Service and standing left to right above), with the Mayor's Customer Service Excellence Award. Special recognition awards were given to, seated left to right, **Joseph Acosta** (Bureau

of Environmental Compliance), **Eric Lippacher** (Bureau of Police and Security), **Jason Tso** (Bureau of Wastewater Treatment), and, not pictured, **James Pena** (Bureau of Customer Service, retired), DEP inspectors who contributed to the creation of the city-wide customer service training curriculum.

Spotlight on Safety

Chemical Safety

In September, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched a new web-based tool called ChemView, which allows users to search for information on specific chemicals. It is designed to improve safety by providing access to chemical specific regulatory information developed by the EPA, and data submitted under the Toxic Substances Control Act. EPA is continuing to populate the database, which

currently contains information on over 1,500 chemicals.

ChemView can be searched by chemical name or CAS number, health effects, hazards, and much more. This is a useful resource for anyone at DEP involved in Employee Health and Safety, the use and storage of hazardous chemicals, and Chemical Inventory Management. For additional information, go to [ChemView](#).

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



Paul Rush, Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Water Supply, is a guest commentator this week.

As hunters from across the Northeast trekked into the woods this past weekend to mark the start of New York's regular hunting season, many found themselves enjoying increased access to City-owned lands across our 1.2 million acre watershed.

Hunting—especially in the watersheds that surround our six reservoirs in the Catskill Mountains—is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation. In fact, many of our DEP colleagues use their leave time to hunt with their families and neighbors.

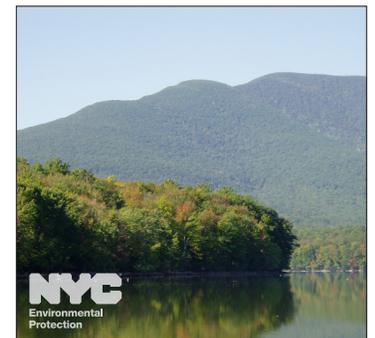
Many residents of New York City, Long Island and other parts of the metro area also travel to the Catskills because state- and City-owned lands amid the mountains are among the most bountiful hunting areas in the region.

In recent years, DEP has supported responsible hunting on our watershed lands, and many other forms of low-impact recreation, by opening more acres to public access. In fact, DEP owns and manages roughly 84,730 acres across the upstate watersheds that are open for hunting, including 57,764 acres known as "Public Access Areas" that do not require a City permit. State hunting permits and regulations still apply.

These City-owned tracts that are open for hunting and trapping are spread across 295 recreational units in eight counties

that include Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester. This year alone, DEP opened an additional 2,663 acres for outdoor recreation, including hunting. These properties were purchased as part of the Land Acquisition Program that protects lands around the reservoirs, streams, creeks and other water bodies that provide clean drinking water to 9 million New Yorkers every day.

DEP has encouraged hunting across its watershed lands because outdoor recreation supports the tourism economy that employs many of our neighbors in the Catskills. But hunting also provides a water quality benefit. Growing deer populations can stunt, or even prevent, the regeneration of forests that serve as natural filters for our drinking water by eliminating elements that affect the water's taste and smell. With this in mind, DEP opened two new areas around Ashokan Reservoir this year as part of a special program to address the unchecked and rapidly growing deer population there.



We encourage our colleagues in the City to learn more about these and other outdoor recreation programs by going to the DEP website and clicking the "Watershed Recreation" link. Aside from hunting, these properties also provide unique opportunities to enjoy the scenic beauty of our watersheds by boating, hiking, fishing and participating in other outdoor activities.

Focus on the Field



Along the rural hills and suburban streets that ramble through the Croton watershed, problem trees are everywhere. There are trees that were knocked down during storms, trees that are growing out of earthen dams, and trees on City property that are hanging over private driveways, porches or swimming pools.

Problem trees, meet **Joe Brunetto**. He's in charge of getting rid of you all.

Brunetto is a Supervisor for DEP's east-of-Hudson operations and he was recently put in charge of a new task force that is charged with finding these trees and carefully removing them. Nine DEP employees are currently assigned to the task force, including four new watershed maintainers.

The task force was the brainchild of DEP's Operational Excellence (OpX) program, which found that in-sourcing some tree work, that had generally been assigned to outside contractors, would yield savings for the City. Task force members have been outfitted with equipment and trained on basic chain-saw use. Soon they will receive additional training to cut trees from bucket trucks, and climb trees to cut their canopies.

Brunetto said tree work abounds. Some problem trees

are growing out of earthen dams along reservoirs, which can compromise the dams' structural integrity. Others are dead, diseased, or weakened by attacks from invasive species. Many have already fallen. And some trees on City property are antagonizing neighbors by hanging over their homes or driveways.

"We are going to clean up the watershed, protect the dams, and have a good-neighbor policy by prioritizing trees located on the edge of City property," Brunetto said.

"The tree task force led by Joe Brunetto is unique because it saves money while fulfilling an operational need at the same time," said **Tina Johnstone**, Director of Operations for the Bureau of Water Supply. "The task force began identifying and cutting trees last month. Its quick start underscores Joe's passion for his work and his ability to lead the team."

Brunetto has worked in myriad positions during his 22 years at DEP. Because the tree task force is new, Brunetto said he's treating it "like a startup company."

That's a familiar mindset for Brunetto, who used to own the Brunetto Cheese Company in Beacon, N.Y. His homemade mozzarella and ricotta cheeses were sold to big groceries like ShopRite and Grand Union, which slapped their store logos on the packaging. He also ran a route for the Arnold bread company before starting with the City.

"I'm letting my entrepreneurial spirit guide me to get this tree task force up and running and to make sure it's successful," he said.

Holiday Food Drive

To benefit charities both in the city and the watershed during the Thanksgiving holiday, DEP is holding its annual holiday food drive. Non-perishable food items can be brought to the 19th floor at [Lefrak Headquarters](#), as well as offices in [Downsville](#), [Kingston](#), [Grahamsville](#), and [Shokan](#). Final days to donate differ, so please click on the link for each office to get more information. If you have questions about what can be donated or require additional assistance, call extension 6561.

New Bronx Sewers and Water Mains



Joining with the Departments of Transportation and Design and Construction, DEP recently completed a \$26.6 million upgrade of the City's critical infrastructure in the Williamsbridge neighborhood in the Bronx. The project included the installation of more than three miles of water mains and 69 fire hydrants to ensure the reliable delivery of drinking water to homes and businesses and adequate pressure to fight fires. In addition, more than a mile of sewers and 140 catch basins were installed to ensure the proper drainage of stormwater from streets and sanitary sewage from homes and businesses. Sixty blocks of resurfaced roadway, new sidewalks, and 144 new street lights will all help to provide a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. For more information [click here](#) and to see a map of where the work took place [click here](#).

Extra Extra!



Please take a moment to view the latest edition of [DEP News](#). If you have any story ideas for future news segments please email them [here](#).

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

Save the Date!



Since **Mayor Bloomberg** launched the Citi Bike Program in May, the 6,000 bikes have been taken on more than 5 million rides and have travelled more than 10 million miles! To learn more about the nation's largest bike share system and how it has reshaped the way people travel in NYC, please

join **Jon Orcutt**, Director of Citi Bike for the NYC Department of Transportation, for the next installment of the DEP Experience Brown Bag Luncheon this Thursday, November 21, at noon in the 3rd floor cafeteria at Lefrak. Please plan to join us, and don't forget to bring your lunch!

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