

## 9/11 - A Look Back at DEP's Response

As the city reflects on the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks, we especially honor the work of our first responders on that tragic day. Whether they came from NYPD, FDNY, OEM, the Port Authority, National Guard, Army Corps of Engineers or DEP, the city will forever owe a debt of gratitude to those whose dedication was boundless in the hour of our greatest need.

Just like other agencies whose work is more well-known, DEP played a critical role in the emergency response to 9/11. With all large-scale fires, DEP ensures that the Fire Department has sufficient water pressure to fight the flames. September 11 was no different. BWSO immediately provided support to FDNY crews around the site perimeter, jointly commanding operations to check and maintain the necessary pressure levels. After the towers collapsed, BWSO shut down a radius from Rector Street to the Battery and from Broadway to the Hudson River, controlling the flow of water into Ground Zero from broken mains and an interceptor sewer pierced by one



BWSO Construction Laborer Terrence Johnson, Manhattan Sewer Maintenance, at work at the WTC site.

of the south tower's steel girders. The surrounding infrastructure had to be inspected and repaired expeditiously, as the compromised pipes could not support the heavy machinery needed to proceed with rescue and recovery. In addition, the thousands of first responders and evacuees taking shelter in the surrounding buildings were in need of fresh water and sanitary sewers.

As described by BWSO Supervisor **Dennis Delaney**, "Very quickly, it

(Continued on reverse side)

## Spotlight on Safety

### Don't bug me!

Two species of pesky insects are frequently identified at office work locations—booklice and meal moths. There are no adverse health effects from these bugs, but it is important to take steps to control them.

Booklice are small insects, which to the untrained eye, look a lot like bedbugs. They are not harmful but do feed on molds and fungi which are created when papers get wet or damp. Most species are found in buildings, where they eat the tiny molds that grow on the pages of slightly damp books and paper. They can destroy paper docu-

ments. Booklice do not bite humans, but they can present a nuisance.

Meal moths are another pesky office bug. They can infect a wide range of food products including cereal, bread, pasta, rice, spices, dried fruit and nuts. Under certain circumstances meal moths have been found to infest sealed bags, but a tight fitting Tupperware or other container are usually effective in keeping them out.

To read the full article please [click here](#).

## Commissioner's Corner

This past Sunday was the 10th anniversary of September 11, 2001—a day our nation and the world will never forget. It is hard to believe it has already been a decade since that fateful day. The experience and memories touch each of us differently, but always in a deep and memorable way. The public will always recall the heroic actions of some of the city's emergency responders, like the FDNY, who bravely ran into the buildings while everyone else ran out. Those actions deserve a permanent place in our collective memory. But here at DEP, we tried to capture some lesser known stories, those of how DEP employees helped in the emergency, recovery and response effort at Ground Zero. They are worth sharing, and I hope you will all read the feature story and realize what a vital role we played in the days after. On behalf of our entire agency, a heartfelt thank you to anyone still here or retired who was involved. I also want to point out a number of people who volunteered this past weekend to help make sure the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ceremony went smoothly: **Angel Roman, Mercedes Padilla, Corey Chambliss, Vlada Kenniff, Margot Walker, Albert Kramer, Bethany Bowyer, Margot Schloss, Mike Saucier, Matt Mahoney and Farrell Sklerov.**

Earlier last week, DEP Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts**, Water Board Treasurer **Mathilde McLean** and I joined Water Board members **Alan Moss, Alfonso M. Carney, Jr.** and **Mehul Patel** to tour two critical DEP facilities in the Bronx: the \$3 billion Croton Filtration Plant and Shaft 2B. Upon arriving at the filtration plant, set to be operational in 2013, we were shown around by Project Manager **Bernard Daly** and Plant Director **Michael Keating**. All were impressed by the vast and complex plant that will filter up to 290 million gallons of water per day. Two of the Water Board members, who had previously toured the plant in 2009, were amazed by the amount of construction that has been completed in the past two years. At the conclusion of the tour, we stood on the roof of the facility, which will ultimately be a "green roof" that is open to the community as a golf driving range. At Shaft 2B, we met with BWSO Deputy Commissioner **Jim Roberts** and members of the



Shaft Maintenance unit, headed by **Michael Sullivan**. The shaft controls flow from Hillview Reservoir into City Water Tunnel No. 3. The operating controls and valves are in a deep underground chamber that is 660 feet in length and houses precision equipment to keep water flowing uninterrupted to city residents and visitors alike.

Finally, last week DEP issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from private firms who are interested in operating and maintaining our \$1.6 billion Ultraviolet Disinfection Facility. The RFQ is part of overall efforts to find the most efficient and affordable way to operate our system—a key component to keeping water rates down in the future. We are asking vendors to submit qualifications to show that they have the expertise and resources necessary to run the plant. Once they can prove that, we will negotiate to identify the firm that can best meet all of our water quality and quantity standards at the lowest cost to our customers. We will then invite our municipal operators to make their own proposal. From those two offers, DEP will make a final selection by summer 2012. If ultimately a private vendor is selected, we will make sure that any DEP employees who were already assigned to the plant will be offered a position within the new firm, or we will work to place them in other DEP facilities. In many ways the rationale behind this is similar to our "insourcing program" that now allows BWT employees to start bidding on certain maintenance contracts at our 14 wastewater treatment plants that were previously only done by private companies. Our decisions are based on getting the best value, without in any way compromising quality.

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.



## Did You Know



... that each Memorial Pool at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum can hold 450,000 gallons of water, the equivalent of filling up 50 Empire State Buildings with water.

### (9/11 - A Look Back at DEP's Response... continued)

became a situation where you had to get water back to the recovery effort." In 12-16 hour shifts, the bureau worked to repair damage and restore service, resting only when the site's lack of electricity prevented them from continuing after dark. BWSO steadily reduced the size of the restricted area, eventually reaching the base of the fallen towers to re-activate needed fire hydrants.

Meanwhile, DERTA Hazardous Materials Specialists arrived on the scene, establishing a command post at Reade Street after taking shelter from the collapse in the World Financial Center parking garage. The specialists took bulk samples of asbestos-containing materials from the surrounding area and had them analyzed by the DEP asbestos lab. Through this sampling, a perimeter was established with a comprehensive asbestos air-monitoring program of 38 monitoring stations in the downtown area. DEP specialists would remain onsite for months, overseeing operations over 16-18 hour shifts. Among the many BEC staffers on scene was Chief of Enforcement **Joe Scafidi**, an integral part of emergency operations throughout the recovery effort. "We were at every inter-agency meeting, every day, until Christmas," Scafidi said.

Shortly after the collapse, a potential crisis came to the attention of DEP: A Freon tank seven stories underground. If heated, the Freon could produce deadly phosgene gas and further endanger the lives of first responders working

above. A team that included Specialist **Chris Haas** descended below ground with an inflatable raft, navigating the wreckage of the building's foundation to secure the tank. To the relief of everyone on site, the crew ascertained that the tank had not been breached, and the Freon was secure.

As recovery operations continued, DEP was instrumental in the effort to clean public spaces—most notably in the re-opening of the New York Stock Exchange just days after the attacks. BEC undertook the methodical process of cleaning building roofs and facades, performing door-to-door inspections and providing informational materials to owners. In addition to notifying owners of available assistance programs and subsidies, DEP helped establish an 800-number hotline for downtown tenants that matched callers with federal, state and local assistance programs. Led by Asbestos Control Program Director **Krish Radhakrishnan**, the program ultimately cleaned more than 1,000 buildings downtown over the following two years.

Back at headquarters, after witnessing the events from the windows of Lefrak City during a weekly senior staff meeting, then Chief of Staff **Charles Sturcken** coordinated emergency response teams with then First Deputy Commissioner **Diana Chapin**. Sturcken also undertook a three-pronged communication effort between BWSO and the Commissioner, DEP and the Mayor's Office, and DEP and state and federal agencies. When BWSO

could not drive their emergency response vehicle below Canal Street, bureau staff proceeded to the site on foot before eventually relocating to an Emergency Command Center at Broadway and Vesey Street. DEP also joined representatives from federal, state and city agencies uptown at the Emergency Command Center established at Pier 96; nearby was a resource center for families of the missing, an effort manned by dozens of DEP staff with colleagues from across city government.

As it became clear that the emergency was the result of a terrorist attack, DEP moved to swiftly shut down public access to the watershed in an operation extending 125 miles north. Bureau of Police and Security Administration Inspector **Frank Milazzo** was then Commander of the Hillview Precinct, and helped execute the bureau security action plan. All of DEP's 124 police officers were assigned to fixed posts at critical infrastructure and directed security patrols.

Officers began working 12-hour shifts and six-day weeks, a schedule which continued through December. DEP closed roads and bridges over dams, thoroughfares which remain closed to this day for security purposes. Like many of his colleagues, Milazzo began sleeping on a cot in his office after 16-hour work days. The long hours were necessary given the enormity of the task; as Milazzo put it, "More than half the state's population relies on us."

All New Yorkers relied on the work of DEP in the days, weeks and months following the September 11 attacks. The agency's critical operations led efforts to maintain and repair our in-city infrastructure, clean the homes and offices of downtown tenants, and protect our air and water supply from future threats. As Dennis Delaney summed up the work of his colleagues, "Our guys did a wonderful job—a very commendable job," adding succinctly: "They did what was required."



Former Commissioner Joel Miele and Director of Economic Development Charles Sturcken survey the devastation at Ground Zero with officials from the US Army and the US Army Corps of Engineers.



Assistant Commissioner Ed Coleman and BWSO field operations staff inspect damage to the water and sewer infrastructure.

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

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