

Protecting Streams and Water Quality



The Catskill Center and DEP recently purchased a [2-acre parcel of land](#) in upstate Greene County—the very first to be protected under the new Streamside Acquisition Program that preserves environmentally sensitive lands alongside streams, creeks and rivers. The newly protected property is in the Town of Windham, is forested, and has 275 feet of stream frontage on a tributary of the Batavia Kill. That stream feeds Schoharie Reservoir, which provides about 15 percent of New York City’s water during a typical year.

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Insights



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Okay, so no one really loves to be “audited.” The word itself may have bad connotations—but it really shouldn’t. Did you know that May is Internal Audit Awareness month?

An internal audit is a good thing for our agency. It is a systematic evaluation of systems, programs and processes within DEP and within bureaus that is designed to reduce risks to employees and the environment. Audits are not an examination of any one person’s work practices or knowledge. Internal audits actually make us stronger

as an organization and give us an opportunity to step back and evaluate how we are doing; and more importantly provide some direction in terms of how we can improve our EHS practices, engagement and procedures. OEHS Auditors also frequently identify best practices at your facility and include that acknowledgment in their reports.

So the next time you see those internal OEHS Auditors, realize that they are on the same DEP team that you are. Stay engaged in making DEP the safest workplace it can be!

Also as a reminder, DEP Safety Week is coming up from June 25–29 so stay tuned for more information about events within your bureau and at Lefrak.

Commissioner’s Corner



\$1.35/month (based on an average consumption of 52,000 gallons of water per year).

DEP is focused on maintaining a package of rates and billing policies that keep rates at a reasonable level for customers facing affordability challenges. A number of billing policies emphasizing rate affordability are expected to be reauthorized for FY19, including the Home Water Assistance Program (which provides a bill credit of \$115 to 65,000 low-income households), the Multifamily Water Assistance Program (which provides a bill credit of \$250 per affordable residential unit to up to 40,000 units located in multifamily properties with at least 15 years remaining on a rental affordability agreement), and freezing the minimum charge for customers who use less than 95 gallons per day.

In addition, **Mayor de Blasio** is not requesting a Rental Payment from the water system for FY19.

While other costs in NYC are higher for residents, water rates are below the average for the thirty largest U.S. cities, and NYC’s relative affordability compared to the thirty largest cities continues to improve, based on 2017 cost data.

Thanks in large part to Mayor de Blasio’s historic decision to forego a rental payment from the water system, in addition to effective management of DEP’s operations and the system’s balance sheet, we are able to fund the City’s critical drinking water and wastewater systems while keeping the cost of water in New York City below the national average.

DEP has proposed a 2.36% increase in the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) water rate to the New York City Water Board. The proposal, if approved by the Water Board, would represent the first rate change since Fiscal Year 2016. The proposal maintains existing affordability programs for low-income homeowners and multi-family housing properties that are expected to benefit as many as 65,000 customers and 40,000 units, respectively. In addition, the proposal recommends freezing the minimum charge at \$1.27 per day for the fifth consecutive year for those customers who use fewer than 95 gallons per day.

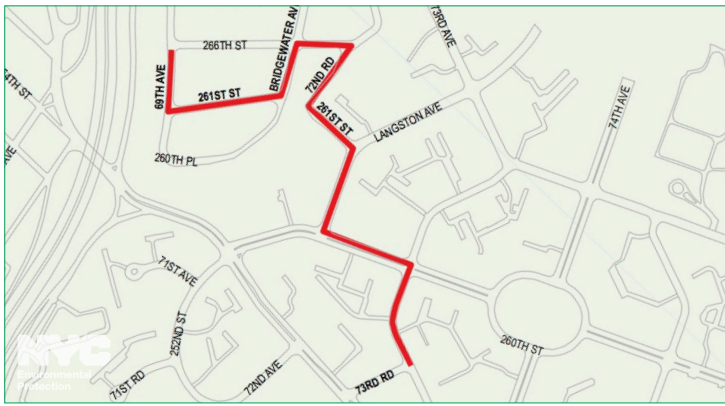
If the 2.36% water rate increase is adopted by the Board:

- A typical single-family homeowner will see an increase from \$1,055/year to \$1,081/year for water and sewer bills—an increase of \$2.17/month (based on an average consumption of 80,000 gallons of water per year).
- A typical multi-family unit with metered billing will see an increase from \$686/year/unit to \$702/year/unit—an increase of



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.

Glen Oaks Drainage Upgrade



A [\\$12.7 million infrastructure project](#) that addresses stormwater runoff from the highest neighborhood in Queens is nearing completion, to the relief of residents who live downhill. More than 4,600 feet of new storm sewers, some as large as 4 feet by 3.5 feet, have been installed over an 11-block area to capture stormwater from the Royal Ranch neighborhood and part of Glen Oaks, directing it to an existing storm sewer at Little Neck Parkway. The new sewers are fed through 58 new catch basins, positioned to best capture water as it runs downhill or collects in low-lying spots. From the highest part of the project to the lowest, the elevation changes by more than 100 feet. The project is part of a \$1.9 billion investment by the City to manage stormwater in Queens. The plan, which focuses on southeast Queens, consists of 45 total infrastructure projects to be completed over the next 10 years. The program is the largest of its kind in the City.

New Space for OD&HR Units



Several Units within the Bureau of Organization Development and Human Resources (OD&HR) relocated last Monday, April 23, to new office space on the 3rd floor of the High Rise at Lefrak. Employees may now reach the Operations, Employee Benefits and Extended Leaves, and Workforce Development and Training Units in their new space. This new and larger space will allow for a smoother workflow between the OD&HR units on the floor and will allow OD&HR to better serve agency employees and external partners. All contact information for staff in these units remains the same. The following OD&HR Units remain on the 18th floor High Rise at Lefrak: Office of the DC, OD&HR, Planning and Recruitment, Strategic and Workforce Planning/Communications, Staff Support and Assistance, and Employee Wellness and Engagement. The Payroll Office remains in its current location on the 3rd floor.

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

Children Come to Work at DEP



A couple hundred children participated last Thursday in various “Take Our Children to Work Day” activities held at Lefrak and several upstate locations. This year’s theme was “Agents for Positive Change” and centered around teamwork, collaboration, problem solving, and logistics. The program was designed to support career development by helping students connect school, the work world, and their own futures.

Rain Barrel Giveaway in The Bronx



DEP joined with Assemblyman **Jeffrey Dinowitz** (pictured above) to distribute 160 rain barrels to Bronx homeowners who attended this past Saturday’s giveaway event in Van Cortlandt Park. Also participating were Council Member **Andrew Cohen**, State Senator **Jeffrey Klein**, Bronx Community Board 8, and Friends of Van Cortlandt Park. The 60-gallon rain barrels are easy to install, collect and store the stormwater that falls on a home’s rooftop, and help reduce a homeowner’s water bill. They also help to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the City’s sewer system, which helps to protect the health of numerous local waterways. Last year, DEP distributed approximately 7,500 rain barrels to New York City homeowners.

Harlem Hospital Conserves Water

NYC Health + Hospitals/Harlem will receive [\\$1.1 million in funding from DEP](#) to further its water conservation efforts. Through water-saving improvements and tracking data, the hospital was able to reduce their water consumption by 35,500 gallons per day over the past two years. This new funding will allow for additional water-efficiency upgrades to be made to toilets, urinals, showerheads, faucets, ice machines, and dishwashers. Upgrades are anticipated to reduce consumption by another 60,000 gallons per day.