

Commissioner's Corner



Last week, I joined, **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia, Director of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Nilda Mesa, and Director of GreeNYC, Roya Kazemi** to launch the City's newest campaign aimed at reducing consumer waste. The campaign, "B.Y.O.," is part of the GreeNYC initiative to promote living a less disposable life by encouraging the use of reusable mugs, bottles and bags rather than their disposable counterparts.

The New York City Department of Sanitation collects more than 3 million tons of waste annually, including 10 billion single-use bags, 315,000 tons of paper for recycling,

and about 800 million bottles of water. On average, Sanitation collects more than 1,700 tons of single-use carryout bags per week, which adds up to more than 90,000 tons per year. Furthermore, paper bags, though easily recyclable in the City's curbside recycling program, are currently only recycled about 5 percent of the time.

When it comes to single-use plastic bottles here are some interesting facts: It takes roughly 1.5 million barrels of oil a year to produce plastic bottles in the United States—enough to power 250,000 homes or 100,000 cars all year. In New York City we are fortunate to have some of the highest quality tap water on the planet, and it happens to be about 1,000 times less expensive than bottled water.

In addition to beautifying our streets, subway system, parks and, beaches, reducing consumption of disposable coffee cups, plastic bottles and bags will help with the depletion of natural resources, carbon emissions associated with the production and transportation of the items, and the impacts associated with transporting and landfilling the waste. Moreover, using reusable items makes economic sense. For example, it costs the city \$12.5 million per year to dispose of single-use carryout bags in landfills outside of the city.

To encourage New Yorkers to live less disposable lives and reduce the amount of waste that requires landfilling each year, the City is enacting several waste prevention opportunities including designing and installing public water fountains to accommodate reusable bottles,

promoting the use of reusable bags through signage, pledges to reuse, and the distribution of reusable bags and water bottles at events throughout the city.

A similar GreeNYC campaign aimed at influencing consumer behavior is already proving effective. The "Stop Junk Mail" tool launched on nyc.gov/greenyc last year has contributed to a total of 5.8 million pounds of consumer paper waste being diverted from the waste stream through New Yorkers opting out of unwanted catalogs and other mail.

GreeNYC is launching the B.Y.O awareness campaign through bus, subway and digital ads, in radio public service announcements, and on billboards and Sanitation trucks reminding New Yorkers to bring reusable mugs, bottles and bags when they're on the go. GreeNYC is also working with small businesses in all five boroughs, in partnership with the Department of Small Business Services, to encourage them to post signage demonstrating their commitment to improving the environment and remind customers to bring their own mugs, bottles and bags when visiting.

This initiative is part of "One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City," the City's comprehensive plan for a sustainable and resilient city for all New Yorkers that addresses social, economic, and environmental challenges of all New Yorkers. The plan sets measurable goals for tackling these challenges in the coming years—including sending zero waste to landfills and reducing waste disposal by 90 percent by 2030. To see additional photos from the event, click [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

Remembering BP Texas City Explosion

2015 marks 10 years since the deadly explosion at a BP refinery in Texas City. On March 23, 2005, fifteen workers were killed and nearly 200 were injured in the blast, which was caused by an ignited vapor cloud that formed from an eruption of flammable liquid hydrocarbons. A deficient Process Safety Management program, among other factors, contributed to the BP explosion. It is important that looking back on this event and the fact that similar disasters have occurred since then that we understand the need for the development of comprehensive process hazard analyses, and analysis of the effectiveness of safeguards used to control hazards.

OSHA is currently revising their [Process Safety Management Standard](#). To conform to these rules at regulated sites, DEP:

- Conducts written hazard assessments detailing the potential effects of an accidental releases
- Evaluates worst-case and alternative accidental releases
- Conducts inspections of mechanical integrity of critical equipment
- Informs the public and emergency response agencies (e.g. the fire department) of any hazards should an accidental release occur
- Holds evacuation/rescue drills with emergency response personnel

To read the full article and watch a BP Texas City Explosion 10 Year Anniversary Safety Message video, visit [Safety & Health magazine's website](#).

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.



New Recreation Trail at Cannonsville



Last week, DEP joined the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC) to announce the completion of a 7-mile hiking loop that includes the historic Rock Rift Fire Tower near Cannonsville Reservoir. All are invited to celebrate the opening of the Rock Rift Trail with a community hike on Friday, May 29 at 11 a.m. The trail—which was cleared and will be maintained by local FLTC volunteers—follows the route of old telephone lines and logging paths as it ascends Tower Mountain to the historic fire tower. Parking for the event and trail is located on the north end of the Apex Bridge (State Route 268) where it meets State Route 10 in the Delaware County town of Tompkins.

The new trail is one leg of the 570-mile Finger Lakes Trail that stretches from the Catskill Mountains to the Allegany State Park in western New York. Several years ago, this portion of the larger Finger Lakes Trail ran along the shoulders of town, county and state highways for nearly 16 miles. Since 2011, FLTC has collaborated with DEP to relocate these sections of the trail onto city-owned properties, including Tower Mountain. The 342-acre property was acquired by the city in 1957, and the trail marks the first time it is open for public recreation.

FLTC's Alley Cat Trail Crew—named for the trail path from the Allegany Mountains to the Catskill Mountains—prepared the trail by clearing overgrown brush and removing fallen trees. Seventeen local members of FLTC will help maintain the trail. DEP provided trail markers that help hikers find and follow the path as it traverses Tower Mountain. The trail runs through a thick-canopy forest, a small section of meadow, and an active bluestone quarry. Some sections of the trail are steep, as it gains more than 1,000 feet of elevation over just a few miles.

The trail leads to the historic Rock Rift Fire Tower, which was constructed in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was used until 1987. The tower, which sits on DEP property but is owned by the state Department of Environmental Conservation, is one of the last unrestored fire towers in the Catskills. While the tower can be viewed from the path, the public is not permitted to climb it. The state is exploring an option to deed the tower to the Town of Tompkins in hopes that it can be restored in the near future.

The Rock Rift Trail is the ninth recreation trail opened on water supply lands owned by New York City. Those that preceded it included two hiking paths near Pepacton Reservoir in Delaware County, a nature trail alongside a school in Conesville in Schoharie County, and a walking and cross-country skiing trail near Windham in Greene County. All have been built through partnerships with local nonprofit groups that focus on land conservation, hiking and outdoor recreation. These have included the Catskill Mountain Club, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Putnam County Land Trust, Teatown Lake Reservation, and the Windham Area Recreation Foundation.

Since 2003, DEP has significantly expanded the amount of city properties within the watershed that are open for recreation. There are now more than 126,000 acres of land and water open for fishing, hiking and other low-impact recreation. Of that, more than 63,000 acres of land are in public access areas that are open to recreation without the need for a DEP access permit. More information about recreation in the watersheds can be found by clicking the "[Watershed Recreation](#)" link at [DEP's homepage](#).

Always Prepared



DEP held its annual chlorine emergency drill last week at the Shaft 18 facility in Westchester County. Chlorine is used to help disinfect drinking water as it moves from the upstate reservoirs towards the city. DEP was joined by local police, firefighters, emergency medical experts and hazmat teams for the annual drill, which keeps first responders prepared for a potential chlorine leak inside the facility.

Recreational Boating Season



Earlier today DEP announced that the 2015 recreational boating program will begin Friday at sunrise on four water supply reservoirs in the Catskills. The popular outdoor program, now in its fourth year, has attracted thousands of boaters to paddle or sail on the Cannonsville, Pepacton, Neversink and Schoharie reservoirs. 2015 will also mark an expansion of the popular rental program to include rental boats at Cannonsville Reservoir for the first time. The rental program, administered by the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC), allows local businesses to store and rent recreational boats alongside the reservoirs. The convenience of rentals attracted more than 350 boaters last year, supported local businesses with thousands of dollars in revenue, and significantly improved access for visitors to the Catskills. DEP and CWC are also improving popular launch sites this year by providing storage racks for those avid boaters who keep their kayaks or canoes at the reservoirs throughout the season. To see more photos, click [here](#).

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