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Fire Hydrant Education Volunteers Hit New York City Streets

Hydrant Education Action Teams Have Helped to Significantly Reduce Reports of Open Fire Hydrants Over the Last Eight Years

Photos of the HEAT Teams are Available on [DEP’s Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today launched the 2015 Hydrant Education Action Team (HEAT) program, a fire hydrant abuse prevention campaign that deploys teams of teens hired through the Department of Youth and Community Development’s (DCYD) Summer Youth Employment Program to inform New Yorkers about the dangers of illegally opening fire hydrants. Illegally opened fire hydrants can release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute and reduce water pressure in neighborhoods, making it difficult to fight fires or lower water pressure in nearby buildings. Since the HEAT outreach campaign began in 2007, reports of illegally opened hydrants during the summer months have been reduced significantly. Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap, which release only 20 to 25 gallons per minute, ensuring adequate water pressure and reducing the risk of a child being knocked over and injured by the force of the water. Spray caps can be obtained by an adult 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses. New Yorkers are urged to report illegally opened fire hydrants to 311 immediately. Opening a hydrant illegally can also result in fines of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both.

“For eight years we have had success spreading the message about the dangers of illegally opened fire hydrants around New York City,” said **DEP**

More Information

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Commissioner Lloyd. “The young leaders participating in the HEAT program help us remind New Yorkers that there is a safe and legal way to open hydrants by using the City-approved spray caps.”

“The Hydrant Education Action Team (HEAT) Program will help DYCD’s Summer Youth Employment Program participants become powerful advocates in their communities.” said **Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner Bill Chong.** “Through HEAT, young people will educate their fellow New Yorkers of dangers associated with illegally opened fire hydrants while also learning the professional, leadership and outreach skills that will benefit them for years to come.”

“The South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBro) is pleased to implement the Hydrant Education Action Team (HEAT) program again this year,” said **Johanna Dejesus, Senior Vice President of Education and Career Development.** “The initiative has improved the quality of life for NYC residents by conserving water resources and improving public safety by combating fire hydrant misuse.”

The HEAT program is run in partnership with SoBro and deploys four teams of 10–12 young adults who distribute literature, posters, and other informational materials about fire hydrant safety at community events, parades, greenmarkets, churches, and libraries. The outreach campaign focuses on neighborhoods in northern Manhattan and the Bronx that have historically seen high rates of unauthorized fire hydrant use during heat waves. In addition to literature, the teams will distribute reusable water bottles and other souvenirs that promote the safe operation of fire hydrants.

SoBro, a not-for-profit community development corporation, has been serving the South Bronx since 1972. SoBro’s programs include adult education and workforce training, real estate and community development, technical and financial assistance for businesses, and an array of programs for youth. For additional information about SoBro, visit sobro.org.

DYCD supports New York City’s afterschool and youth workforce development programs throughout the five boroughs. The agency also oversees funding for anti-poverty programs, such as adult literacy and immigrant services. For more information, please go to nyc.gov/dycd or follow DYCD on Facebook and Twitter.

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city’s Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city’s reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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