

Spotlight on Safety



Expect the Unexpected

Each spring, National Work Zone Awareness Week helps to bring national attention to motorist and worker safety in and around roadway work zones. This year's theme, "Expect the Unexpected," focuses on driving near work zones which requires motorists to constantly be alert and be prepared for changes—normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be closed, narrowed, or shifted, and people may be working on or near the road. Lack of attention behind the wheel of a moving vehicle can result in costly mistakes including

fines, jail time and, unfortunately, sometimes a life. Last week, **Will Meyers**, Supervisor **Joe Sedita** and **Mike Pucciarelli** from DEP's Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations joined **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**, elected officials and our private utility partners for a press event. DEP has also outfitted its vehicles with special magnets reminding everyone to drive safely in work zones.

In addition to being alert and paying special attention while driving near a work zone, equal concern must be taken when DEP employees create a work zone themselves. Work zone setups must follow the procedures listed in DEP's [Traffic Work Zone Safety Policy](#). For more information visit [National Work Zone Awareness Week](#) and [DOT](#).

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.

Commissioner's Corner

At a meeting of the New York City Water Board last Friday, DEP proposed the lowest water rate increase in a decade. The proposed 3.24% increase in Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) is 34% lower than the published projection of 4.9% anticipated for this spring. The significant reduction was achieved through internal cost savings and underspending, interest rate savings, and by redirecting part of the rental payment. The proposal also recommends freezing the minimum charge for the second consecutive year for more than 150,000 customers who use fewer than 100 gallons per day, which a quarter of all single-family homeowners do, many of them seniors.

If the 3.24% water rate increase is adopted by the Board, a typical single-family homeowner will see an increase of less than \$3 per month, on average. And, a typical multi-family unit with metered billing will see an increase of less than \$2 per month. In addition, as part of this year's rate proposal, DEP has introduced a number of progressive changes to the water and wastewater rate schedule for FY16.

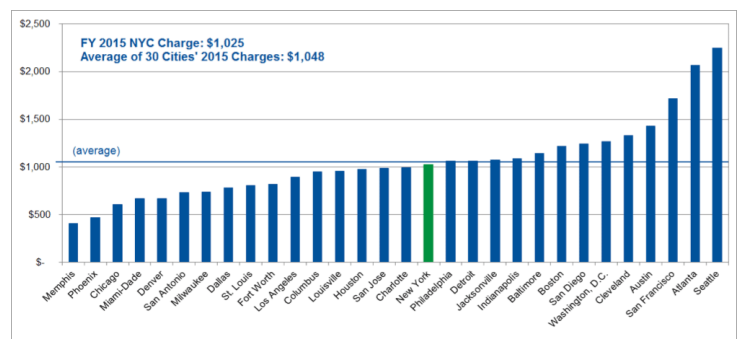
First, DEP has recommended freezing the minimum charge for customers who use less than approximately 100 gallons of water per day. Those customers are currently billed at the minimum water charge of \$1.27 per day, including wastewater charges. Freezing the minimum charge for a second consecutive year will benefit ratepayers by \$2.2 million.



DEP is also proposing an expansion of the Home Water Assistance Program which, last year, provided a \$116 credit annually to 12,500 low-income homeowners who qualified for the federal Home Energy Assistance Program. This year DEP is expanding the program to include an additional 46,500 low-income senior and disabled homeowners who receive Department of Finance property tax exemptions.

In addition, this year DEP will offer all customers the option to be billed on a monthly basis and customers who sign up for eBilling and monthly billing will receive a one-time \$10 credit after delivery of their third consecutive monthly eBill.

Below is a graph that shows how water rates in New York City compare to other big cities in the country. To learn more about how DEP was able to keep this year's water rate as low as possible, or to see a schedule of upcoming public Water Board hearings, [click here](#).



New Life for Century Old Pump Station



DEP recently announced an extensive \$210 million rehabilitation and upgrade of the century-old Avenue V Pumping Station in Gravesend, Brooklyn. The refurbished facility now has the capacity to pump 80 million gallons of sanitary and stormwater flow to the Owl's Head Wastewater Treatment Plant each day, more than 150 percent more than it could before the upgrade. Modeling shows that this will reduce sewer overflows into Coney Island Creek by 87 percent and substantially improve the health and cleanliness of the waterway. Originally built between 1911 and 1916, the pump station was designed in the Beaux Arts architectural style and, over the years, more utilitarian additions to the facility blocked much of the original building's façade. In consultation with both the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Public Design Commission, those additions have been torn down and the building's distinctive original details have been meticulously restored.

The Avenue V Pumping Station serves southwest Brooklyn and

helps to force wastewater to flow north through the sewer system towards the Owls Head Wastewater Treatment Plant. Prior to this upgrade, the facility could pump up to 30 million gallons of wastewater a day through two force mains, with 24 and 30-inch diameters. As part of the work, DEP built more than six miles of new, 42 and 48-inch diameter force mains, located up to 40 feet beneath street level. To provide a measure of redundancy, six new 350 horsepower centrifugal pumps were installed. When operating at full wet weather capacity the facility requires four pumps, so two additional pumps are now available in the event of an operating pump failure or if one is taken out of service.

The main building of the Avenue V Pumping station was originally designed by Albert A. Martin who was employed by the Department of Public Works, which at the time was housed within the Brooklyn Borough President's office. Eligible for a New York City Landmark designation in May of 1998, the building is designed in the Beaux-Arts style, with symmetrical



facades and lavish use of terra cotta details. The rehabilitation was done in a manner consistent with the architectural detail of the original building to preserve its historical character. Martin also designed at least four other pumping stations in a range of styles, of which three, the Gowanus, Paerdegat Basin, and Coney Island Pumping Stations, still exist.

The completion of the upgrade to the Avenue V Pump Station will help to support the overall environmental

and economic revitalization and resiliency of Coney Island. This includes the ongoing Coney Island Creek Tidal Barrier and Wetlands Feasibility Study which is a key component of the City's comprehensive resiliency planning for the communities around Coney Island Creek and beyond. To view photos of the restored Avenue V Pumping Station [click here](#). To read about the restoration in a recently published New York Times story, [click here](#).



Halfway There...



Thanks to the diligent effort of work crews, both shafts for the Delaware Aqueduct Bypass Tunnel are now more than halfway complete. As of this week, Shaft 5B in Newburgh has reached a depth of 518 feet, and Shaft 6B in Wappinger had reached 373 feet deep. The shafts will be 900 and 700 feet deep respectively when they are finished next year. The shafts will provide access for construction crews to build a bypass tunnel around a leaking section of the Delaware Aqueduct. The bypass—one of the most complex repair projects in the history of the water supply—is scheduled to be complete in 2023. See more photos [here](#).

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