

Commissioner's Corner



Vincent Sapienza
Commissioner

I am pleased to present DEP's [2017 New York Harbor Water Quality Report](#) (PDF). With 522 miles of shoreline, New York City's waterways are one of our greatest assets. As a protector of public health and the environment, DEP is leading efforts to restore New York Harbor's natural ecology. These investments have paid off and we're now seeing plant and animal species returning to our waterways in numbers we haven't seen in decades—including whales! We

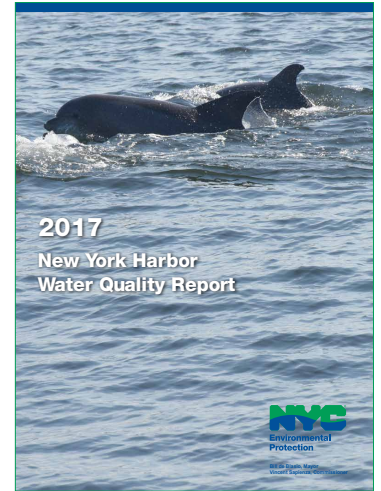
have invested more than \$12 billion to expand the nation's most ambitious green infrastructure program and upgrade our wastewater treatment plants and sewer system and, moving forward, we will invest more than \$4.4 billion to implement a series of cleanup plans for the Gowanus Canal, Newtown Creek, Flushing Bay, the Bronx River, and other local waterways.

Our work has resulted in significant achievements, including increasing our CSO capture rate from 30 percent in the 1980s to 80 percent today, rising dissolved oxygen levels in all four areas of the harbor, and a dramatic de-

crease in ammonia and chlorophyll 'A' concentrations in Jamaica Bay.

I'd like to thank our staff in BWT, BEPA, BEDC, and BWSO who are hard at work modernizing our wastewater treatment plants, designing, constructing and caring for thousands of green infrastructure assets throughout the City, reconstructing acres of natural wetlands, and separating sewers.

And, many thanks to our Harbor Survey Program, and Marine Sciences, and Microbiology Lab staff, including Division Chief **Allen Deur**, Section Chief **Beau Ranheim**, Chief **William Kelly**, **Naji Yao**, **Bernadette Boniecki**, **Yin Ren**, **Markus Koelbl**, **Kaled Alamarie**, **William Lopez**, **Stavros Georgiadis**, **Lloyd Stephen**, **Abeba Negatu**, and **Jih**



2017
New York Harbor
Water Quality Report

Shyu for testing and analyzing hundreds of water samples to confirm that New York Harbor is the cleanest it has been in nearly 110 years of testing.

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Insights



Persis Luke
Assistant Commissioner
Environmental, Health
and Safety

September is National Preparedness Month. At DEP, we regularly review, update and practice our emergency protocols by actively engaging in emergency exercises, fire drills, chlorine release drills, targeted tabletop exercises and more. In the near future, we will assess and update our incident command system training programs as well as conduct a hurricane readiness tabletop exercise that leverages what we learned from Super Storm Sandy. We also conduct specialized training for various response groups and operations staff.

Emergency preparedness is important outside of the office as well. Costs associated with a disaster can be more than you expect, so be sure to check your insurance policies and coverage for the hazards you may face, such as floods, earthquakes, and tornados. Also, know how to take practical safety steps that might be required in the event of an emergency. Consider taking time to learn lifesaving skills like CPR and first aid. Find out how to get the information or supplies you will need during an emergency and make a communications plan with your family. It will provide peace of mind knowing that you have done what you can to be ready!

For more information, visit [Ready.gov](#) and the [National Safety Council](#).



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.

Best Tasting Tap Water in the State



New York City tap water was awarded the top prize last week at the New York State Tap Water Taste Test competition. The statewide event began with 30 municipalities competing in regional competitions with the winners meeting on Thursday at the Great New York State Fair in Syracuse. In the finals, New York City's tap water was pitted against drinking water from other regional winners, including Saratoga County and the Village of Holley (Orleans County). State Fair visitors sampled tap water from the three suppliers and ranked them by taste, with New York City's tap water judged the best. Click [here](#) to view news coverage of the event.

Playground 52 Ribbon Cutting



Commissioner Sapienza joined with Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., Council Member Raphael Salamanca, and other community members to celebrate the ribbon cutting of Playground 52 in the Bronx. The newly installed rain gardens and storm chambers will help to capture more than 780,000 gallons of stormwater each year, which will help to reduce flooding and improve the health of surrounding waterways. A big thank you to our green infrastructure team, particularly John McLaughlin and Teddy Geberemariam, who manage green infrastructure projects across the city and at all our CPI partnership sites. DEP has committed more than \$50 million in funding to the Community Parks Initiative, which is going towards the installation of new green infrastructure and helping to transform neighborhood parks citywide.

Nitrogen Reduction in Coney Island



DEP is commencing a [\\$57 million upgrade](#) to the Coney Island Wastewater Treatment Plant that will reduce the amount of nitrogen released into Jamaica Bay and help to improve the overall ecology of the waterway. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2022. This work complements the \$460 million in upgrades that have already been completed to reduce nitrogen discharges from the Jamaica and 26th Ward Wastewater Treatment Plants, which similarly drain to Jamaica Bay. The Coney Island plant currently removes approximately 35 percent of the nitrogen present in the wastewater. The introduction of new, enhanced nitrogen removal technology, which converts the organic nitrogen present in wastewater into inert nitrogen gas that is released harmlessly into the atmosphere, requires significant upgrades to much of the plant's supporting infrastructure. Work at the Coney Island plant will include the installation of baffles and hyperbolic mixers, new process air distribution piping and local isolation valves, new foam spray pumps and strainers, a new polymer feed system and storage, the repair of existing concrete and tank joints, and an upgrade of the electrical support system.

Hiking the Palmer Hill Trail



The Palmer Hill Trail is the second hiking trail created by DEP in partnership with the Catskill Mountain Club. The 3.7-mile long trail is located just off Route 28, between Margaretville and Andes, and features spectacular views looking southeast into the heart of the Catskill High Peaks.

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