

Commissioner's Corner



It is hard to believe that exactly one year has passed since Hurricane Sandy—the worst natural disaster in our City's history and the second costliest in the Nation's history. Sandy made landfall in New Jersey, pushed water up the New York Bight to the City, and caused a record 14-foot storm surge. DEP employees heroically worked through the storm clearing flooded roadways, treating wastewater, securing our infrastructure, and preparing for the daunting tasks we faced in the aftermath. More than 1,100 DEP employees live in the flood zones and were directly affected by the storm

but, nonetheless, worked tirelessly through many long days and nights to secure the city. In the days following Sandy, DEP was on the front lines of the recovery effort, clearing downed trees and other debris, pumping flood waters, providing drinking water to residents in Breezy Point, monitoring air quality, and helping other utilities restore power and water to millions of New Yorkers.

Sandy hit our wastewater treatment plants and pump stations particularly hard. In total, 10 of the City's 14 treatment plants and 42 of our 96

pumping stations were damaged during the storm. DEP staff worked around the clock, often in dangerous conditions, to maintain or restore service and, just four days after Sandy, 99 percent of all New York City wastewater was being treated. Over the past year, we have invested nearly \$50 million on repairs to our wastewater infrastructure, and by the time all the work is completed, we expect that the immediate damages from Sandy will top \$100 million. Fortunately most of the cost of repairs will be paid for by FEMA and will not be passed along to our customers.

In many ways, Hurricane Sandy confirmed what we already knew—climate change is causing sea levels to rise and increasing the intensity of coastal storms. In 2011, a project team composed of employees from the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis (BEPA) and the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) began work on an assessment of the risk climate change poses to DEP's wastewater collection and treatment systems. Following the storm, that analysis was significantly expanded and, earlier today—on the first anniversary of Sandy—we released the [New York City Wastewater Resiliency Plan](#). This groundbreaking study, based on an asset-by-asset analysis of the risks from storm surge under new flood maps at all 14 treatment plants and 58 pumping stations, representing more than \$1 billion in infrastructure.

The study concludes that if action is not taken to make our wastewater treatment plants and pump stations more resilient to climate change, damage to the equipment from repeated coastal flooding at projected sea levels

could exceed \$2 billion over the next 50 years. The analysis also recommends \$315 million in upgrades at these facilities to protect valuable equipment and minimize disruptions to critical services during future storms.

As part of the analysis, flood pathways at each DEP facility and the location of critical equipment were compared to anticipated flood elevation levels under new base flood advisory maps. The project team considered the value of each asset in wastewater treatment plants and pump stations, the population and critical facilities they serve, and potential impacts on nearby beaches and waterways, to determine the appropriate level of resiliency investment. Cost-effective measures, such as elevating equipment, waterproofing buildings, and replacing traditional pumps with submersible pumps, were selected based upon cost and level of risk reduction. The New York City Wastewater Resiliency Plan is a portfolio of strategies that will be implemented as part of future capital projects and serve as a basis for requests for federal hazard mitigation funding.

At two facilities already in the midst of upgrades, the Manhattan and Gowanus Pump Stations, we have already incorporated a number of resiliency measures into ongoing work. See photos [here](#).

I would like to thank the report's project team, **Angela Licata, Pinar Balci, Alan Cohn, Sydney Mescher, Anthony Maracic, and Julie Stein**, and the dozens of other DEP contributors from BWT, BEDC, our Energy team, and the consultants at Hazen and Sawyer and CH2Mhill.

Spotlight on Safety

Canned Air


Canned-air products such as Dust-off are commonly used in offices to clean and remove dust from electronic equipment. It should not be assumed that these products only contain harmless pressurized air. In fact, a variety of gases, including some that are highly flammable, are used in these products and proper safety practices should be implemented. Improper use can create a flammable atmosphere, cause frost bite, and even asphyxiation. The hazards posed by a particular canned-air product depend on its contents and how it is used.

DEP employees should follow these basic steps to protect themselves from the hazards associated with canned-air products:

- Only use a canned-air product in an open and well-ventilated area
- Substitute with a non-flammable version
- Make sure to read the label on the can and follow the safety instructions
- Review the Safety Data Sheet for potential hazards

For more information see DEP's Policy on [Hazard Communication/Right to Know](#).

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. 



Focus on the Field



Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) Superintendent **Chris Laudando** left his home in Bayside on Monday morning, October 29, 2012, and headed to his office at DEP's Collections Facilities South (CFS) headquarters at Paedergat Basin. He would work non-stop for the next three days and not return home until Wednesday evening.

Covering nine drainage areas across southern Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, CFS lay directly in the path of Hurricane Sandy. As the storm churned toward the New York region on Monday, Laudando assigned his team of 65 sewage treatment workers and stationary engineers to the numerous pump stations, regulators, and interceptor sewers that collect and convey the area's wastewater to treatment plants. Staff remained on site at their assigned posts until conditions became too dangerous late Monday evening and they sheltered at the Paedergat Basin facility.

Early Tuesday morning, the crews fanned out across CFS to conduct inspections and document any damage. The destruction wrought by Sandy quickly became evident as they reported 7 pump stations completely destroyed and another ten that were damaged and without power. The record storm surge had dumped salt water into facilities located in low-lying areas or with subterranean equipment and the electrical gear and pumps were knocked offline. Crews quickly mobilized the generators and diesel pumps that had been marshaled prior to the storm in order to get the pump stations back up and running and, just four days after the storm, DEP was treating 99 percent of the city's wastewater.

"The training, preparation, experience, and herculean effort of the crews all contributed to New York City bouncing back very quickly from the storm," said Laudando.

"Much of the staff lives in areas that were affected by the storm and many had homes that were flooded, but they remained on the job and helped to protect public health and New York harbor."

The work continued for many months as Laudando worked with BWT's in-house design teams and the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction on longer-term reconstruction projects and, by the summer of 2013, the work was substantially complete. Laudando and his team have also worked on the Resiliency Plan for New York City's Wastewater Facilities.

Born in Queens, Laudando was raised in Flushing. He attended Holy Cross High School and studied electrical engineering at St. Johns University. In April of 1993 he joined DEP as a sewage treatment worker and over the years earned promotions to senior sewage treatment worker, stationary engineer electric, and senior engineer. In 2009 he became superintendent of CFS.

"During Chris' 20 years with DEP he has worked in many of the job titles that he now supervises and this experience helps make him an extremely effective leader for CFS," said **Jerry Volgende**, BWT's Chief of Collections Facilities Operations. "Chris and the teams in both Collections North and South did tremendous work before, during, and after Sandy."

Laudando's home in Bayside lost power for a few days after Sandy and he credits his wife for taking care of their three children, ages 16, 12, and seven, which allowed him to remain at work and get DEP's critical services back up and running in short order. Now that his work days have regained some semblance of normalcy, he enjoys spending his time outside of the office cheering on his children at their baseball, softball, and basketball games.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 28 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Patrick Bandy, Jahmil Barrett, Deonarine Bindesh, Alex Brown Jr., Kevin Cannon, James Cosme, Tarnima Farhin, Luis Galdamez, Maged Ibrahim, Serge W. Jean, Anna J. Liddicoat, Frank Malandrucolo, Michael Manchiso, A.K.M. Quamrul Mazumder, Allen Mohamed, Nicholas Munro, Svapneshkumar Patel, Edwardo Rivera, and Sahadrock Vasquez with BWSO; **McHughes Anokwuru, Lo Y. Chan, and Douglas Jones III** with BEDC; **Gary F. Esposito, Gavin C. O'Rourke, and Daniel Park** with BWS; **Kalita Mohammed and Daniel Scarnecchia** with BWT; and **Marissa Kinsey** with Executive.

Kudos Corner



Many DEP employees were actively involved in the recent Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk, raising a total of \$1,320 to assist people with breast cancer today and to help find a cure to end the disease tomorrow. [Click here](#) to see photos.

Tiara Street, Jean Nunnally, Tania Leary, Ishak Omar, Keri Gordon-Russell, Charmaine Berry, Veronica Thompson, Juanita James, Farrah Ahmad, Diane Charan-Fazil, Barbara Baird, Bertha Enciso, Dionne Roche, Deneen A. Davis, Pamela Francis, Angela Emile, Eva Lynch, Grace Pigott, Tammy Y. Conner, Carrie Ballah, Phyllis Peters, Hopeton McPherson, Marie Pichardo, T'pring Scott, Cassandra Kaye King, and Yamilka Cordero.

Save the Date



Just recently, **Mayor Bloomberg** activated the \$1.1 billion final leg of City Water Tunnel No. 3 in Manhattan. To learn more about this vital project and the decades long effort to make it a reality, please join **Jim Roberts**, Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, for the next installment of the DEP Experience Brown Bag Luncheon tomorrow,

October 30, at noon in the 3rd floor cafeteria at Lefrak. Please plan to join us, and don't forget to bring your lunch!

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