

Port Richmond Wastewater 'Power' Plant



Yesterday, Deputy Mayor or **Cas Holloway** and **Commissioner Strickland** announced the launch of an innovative solar power public-private partnership on the roof of the Port Richmond Wastewater Treatment Plant on Staten Island. As part of the program, Tangent Energy Solutions will install solar arrays totaling more than 1.85 megawatts on the roofs of four City buildings in Staten Island and the Bronx. Together, the solar installations will produce more than 2 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually—enough to power

245 residential homes, decrease greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 700 metric tons a year, and help City government reach its PlaNYC goal of reducing municipal greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2017. The partnership allows the City to avoid the upfront capital cost of purchasing, installing, and maintaining the solar facilities. Instead, the City provides the space on which to build the solar facilities and will purchase the energy from Tangent for use on-site. It is

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Spotlight on Safety

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning


Carbon monoxide (CO) is a toxic gas that is extremely dangerous because it is colorless and odorless and can affect a person without any warning signs. Sources of exposure include indoor use of gasoline-powered tools such as concrete cutting saws, compressors, floor buffers or generators without adequate ventilation. Symptoms include headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, and tightness across the chest. Anyone who experiences these symptoms should seek fresh air immediately and get medical attention. Severe poisoning can cause neurological damage, illness, coma, and even death.

Exposure to carbon monoxide can be avoided by taking the following safety precautions:

- Never use generators indoors or in garages. If used outdoors, place a considerable distance from windows or vents, or areas where people congregate.
- Ensure generators have 3-4 feet of clear space on all sides to achieve adequate ventilation.
- If available, consider using tools powered by electricity or compressed air.

For more information visit:


CDC: Carbon Monoxide Safety 

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

Last Thursday, more than 760 DEP employees were honored at Employee Recognition Day for their years of service and for showing their dedication with perfect attendance. The recognition ceremony was held at Bruno's on the Boulevard in East Elmhurst and it was a great opportunity to shine a light on the many outstanding accomplishments of the nearly 6,000 men and women who make DEP among the premier agencies in New York City. At DEP we are fortunate to have a great workforce with a wealth of institutional knowledge. Employee Recognition Day does not just honor employees who have served the City for a number of years—it recognizes them for the invaluable experience they offer as DEP tackles current and future challenges.

The ceremony was originally scheduled to take place in November, but was postponed because of the extensive damage Hurricane Sandy caused to the event's planned location, DC37's headquarters in Lower Manhattan. Hurricane Sandy has made this past year challenging for the entire city, including the more than 1,100 DEP employees living in evacuation Zones A and B. Despite the challenges, DEP has remained focused on our mission to protect public health and the environment by supplying clean drinking water, collecting and treating wastewater, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous substances pollution. At Thursday's ceremony I was proud to report that DEP has already achieved 57 of the 100 distinct initiatives outlined in our strategic plan, *Strategy 2011-2014*, and we have taken considerable steps to achieve another 30.

The 762 employees who represented DEP at this year's Employee Recognition Day ceremony have a combined 11,202 years with the City and many have served the people of New York for more than three decades. A complete list of the honorees and photographs from the ceremony are available here .



Central to DEP's mission is protecting the public and the environment and as we begin to reflect on yesterday's events at the Boston Marathon, I want to take this opportunity to remind all of you that it is our collective responsibility to remain vigilant and protect our employees and critical facilities. While there is no specific threat or information regarding the New York City water supply or any other DEP facilities or assets, the safety and security of all DEP employees, facilities, and infrastructure is a top agency priority at all times.

If you observe any suspicious behavior, individuals, or vehicles at a DEP facility, immediately notify the authorities and your supervisor. Be sure to secure all gates, doors and other access points with locks, pass-card entry, guards, or other effective deterrents. Also, remember that all DEP employees and contractors must wear visible identification while on DEP property. Take steps to safeguard all critical equipment such as vehicles, keys, radios, laptops, portable electronic storage devices, uniforms, and critical documents, including maps and drawings. If your facility uses camera and/or video monitoring equipment, it should be included on your site walk-through inspections to ensure it is working properly. We all play a critical role in keeping ourselves, our co-workers, and our facilities safe and secure. In short, if you see something, say something.

Finally, as events continue to unfold in Boston, please keep the victims and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Focus on the Field



For more than 20 years, **Keith Beckmann**, Chief for Process Research and Development for the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment, has worked to ensure that DEP is employing cutting edge technology in the wastewater treatment process. New Yorkers produce, and DEP collects and treats, more than 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day. Ensuring that the wastewater is treated effectively before it is released into local waterways is essential to the health of New York Harbor and the city's 600 miles of shoreline. It also helps make New York a desirable place to live and raise a family. And New York Harbor water is cleaner and healthier today than it has been in over 100 years.

Most recently, Beckmann has been involved in the introduction of nitrogen removal technology at the wastewater treatment plants located on the Upper East River and Jamaica Bay. To further improve the health of our local waterways, DEP is investing more than \$1.1 billion to reduce the level of nitrogen present in the water before it is released and Beckmann has been a key player in the development of these new technologies. In fact, thanks in large part to the work

of Beckmann and his team in the Operation Support Unit, DEP and two of its research consultants recently received a top honor at the 2013 American Council of Engineering Companies of New York's (ACEC New York) 46th annual Engineering Excellence Awards. The Empire Award for research and development recognized the cutting edge nitrogen removal technology developed at the 26th Ward Wastewater Treatment Plant.

"We are pleased that our work is helping to improve New York's environment," said Beckmann. "I work with a terrific team, including **Jennifer Velasquez**, **Joe Ibarra**, **Linda Singh**, and **John Sexton** that has helped the research projects proceed smoothly and none of this could be possible without a great team effort."

"I have known Keith for many years now, and have always found that his level of effort and ability to handle, without hesitation, any task presented to him is simply amazing," said **Allen Deur**, Chief of Operations Support. Bringing this dedication and broad-based experience to the table, Keith has been instrumental in many of the significant contributions that BWT's research arm has made both in-house and in the field of wastewater treatment technology."

Beckmann is an avid traveler and photographer. When he's not at Lefrak headquarters or at one of the 14 treatment plants, he enjoys visiting National Parks around the world to photograph outdoor landscapes, for which he has won numerous awards over the years.

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expected that the partnership will save the City more than \$8 million than if the projects were built with public funding.

The 200,000 square foot roof at the Port Richmond facility will be home to the largest of the four solar installations and will generate approximately 1.6 million kilowatt hours—which will supply as much as 10 percent of the plant's power needs—enough energy to power 169 residential homes. Pre-installation work on the roof has already been completed with the installation of

a geo-membrane, creating the city's largest Cool Roof. This lowers the temperature within the facility and will reflect sunlight back towards the solar array, increasing their efficiency.

Taken together, the four installations will triple the amount of solar energy generated on City buildings, thereby reducing the City's carbon footprint, improving air quality, and increasing the reliability of the electricity grid, particularly during the hottest months of the year.

Springfield Gardens Bluebelt



Work on the \$69 million upgrade to the water delivery and sewer systems, as well as a new Bluebelt, is well underway in Springfield Gardens. As seen above, the excavation for a wetland area has made substantial progress and the dredging of Springfield Lake will begin in the next few weeks. The installation of 84 new catch basins and nearly three miles of storm sewers will have the capacity to direct nearly 2.5 million gallons of stormwater each rainy day to the new wetlands where it will be stored and naturally filtered, thereby improving the health of Jamaica Bay. In addition, nearly three miles of trunk and distribution water mains are being installed. The full project is expected to be completed in 2014.

Kudos Corner



Deputy Commissioner of Sustainability **Angela Licata** was recognized for her work on climate change at last week's Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) conference where she accepted a "Hero of the Harbor" award on behalf of the entire DEP team. Deputy Commissioner for Wastewater Treatment **Vincent Sapienza** was also featured at the conference and he spoke about the resiliency of DEP's wastewater collection and treatment facilities and how the department was able to quickly restore service after Hurricane Sandy (also pictured is MWA Chair and former DEP Commissioner **Chris Ward** and Brooklyn Bridge Park President **Regina Myer**).

Volunteer Opportunity

Parts of the Staten Island Bluebelt were heavily littered with debris during Hurricane Sandy. We invite you to join us on Saturday, April 27th to help restore these vital wetlands to their natural beauty. Volunteers will help collect trash and other light debris washed into the Bluebelt by the storm surge. The event will take place from 9:30am to 1:00pm in the Midland Beach area of Staten Island. Transportation from Lefrak will be available but limited to the first ten employees who RSVP. To volunteer, please RSVP before April 24th to: DEPVolunteerDay@dep.nyc.gov. Thank you in advance!

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