

## Commissioner's Corner

Last week, I joined Parks and Recreation Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver to announce that automatic shut-off timers and activation buttons have been installed at 225 spray showers at playgrounds to reduce water consumption and ensure the showers are activated only when they are in use. The work is part of a city-wide effort to reduce water consumption by 5 percent by 2018. Work is also underway at an additional 145 showers and our goal is to have the activation buttons installed at 400 spray showers by 2017. Reducing water use at playground showers is not only good for our conservation efforts, it also creates additional capacity in local sewer systems, which will help mitigate flooding during heavy rain and ease pressure on the City's wastewater treatment plants. In addition, it will reduce the costs associated with treating drinking water and disinfecting wastewater. DEP is funding the approximately \$3 million cost of upgrading the 400 spray showers.



Timed playground spray showers are the result of significant inter-agency cooperation to conserve water during the high demand summer months. Without timers and reactivation buttons, playground showers use approximately 5,600 gallons of water each day. Timers could reduce that consumption by 80 percent. Once all 400 spray showers have been upgraded, we project a savings of 1.5 million gallons of water per day.



Since the program launched, DEP has upgraded 225 spray showers, including:

- 55 in Brooklyn
- 36 in Manhattan
- 76 in Queens
- 8 in Staten Island
- 50 in the Bronx

St. Nicholas Park, where we made the announcement, has not only benefitted from this new timer on the spray shower, it has also seen targeted improvements through the Community Parks Initiative. Through this program the Parks Department launched last year with Mayor de Blasio, 60 parks and playgrounds across the city have received upgrades and repairs and thanks to DEP's water conservation program and the Community Parks Initiative, many playgrounds are now vibrant community spaces, and serve as an example of a

more healthy and sustainable New York.

In addition to DEP's work in Parks, we have also established a partnership with the Department of Education to install more than 40,000 high-efficiency bathroom fixtures in 500 public school buildings across the city. Once completed, these retrofits will conserve approximately 4 million gallons of water each school day.

To encourage water conservation in private properties, DEP also recently launched a voucher-based program to replace roughly 150,000 outdated residential toilets with high efficiency models. The new toilet rebate program will build on the success of a similar rebate program that ran from 1994 to 1997 and replaced 1.3 million toilets and reduced citywide water consumption by 90 million gallons per day.

To view photos of the event visit [DEP's Flickr Page](#).

## Spotlight on Safety

### NYC Fire Code Amendments

New York City's Administrative Code requires that the Fire Code is reviewed every three years and appropriate amendments are submitted for City Council consideration. In December 2013, the City Council passed, and the Mayor signed, Local Law No. 148 of 2013 which updated the Fire Code.

The 2014 Fire Code became effective March 30, 2014 and requires that all materials, operations and facilities be in compliance with the code. The

new code also requires new Certificates of Fitness (COF) and several of the changes to the code apply to DEP's Downstate operations.

For a summary of the new code and details on recently updated COFs that apply to DEP's downstate operations please see the following memo on [FDNY Certificates of Fitness](#). To keep up-to-date with all new COFs by review FDNY's [Certificate of Fitness website](#).

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.



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## Peak Performance

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Each year, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) recognizes the wastewater treatment facilities from across the country that consistently meet National Pollution Discharge Elimination System limits throughout the full calendar year. For their outstanding work in 2014, both the Bowery Bay and Red Hook Wastewater Treatment Plants received NACWA's Gold Peak Performance Award. The honor is a recognition of the hard work put in by the employees who staff the facilities and their commitment to sustained excellent performance. Congratulations to all the staff that worked so hard to protect public health and the environment!



Pictured from left to right: **Werner Plut, Brian Kehoe, Jason Ortiz, Roger Young, Diego Adragna, Chris Vedrin, Rawle Jordan, Michael Rotimi, Mahendra Patel, Commissioner Emily Lloyd, Elio Paradis, William Vassallo, Jose Lebron, Dimitri Dimitrou, Joseph Sorrentino, Daniel Weaverling, Bruno Speziale, Frantz Cham and Nick Tramontano.**



Pictured: **Sammy Andalib, Peter Beck, Salvatore Buglino, James Cassar, Joseph Costantino, Kenneth Cronin, Phillip Dhanpaul, Shameer Diamally, John Engesser, Elia Garcia, Yue Yue Guo, Michael Halik, Prakash Haridat, Hubert Iturres, Eric Klee, Scott Liebman, Commissioner Emily Lloyd, Enver Markovic, Christopher Martell, Robert McCallum, Richard Nurse, Elio Paradis, Dragan Pilovic, Christopher Reyes, Henrick Reynolds, Nader Shenouda, Varinder Singh, Garajh Subhaw, MD Hasmat Ullah, Jorge Velasquez, Stanley Ward and Angelo Zeppetelli.**

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**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov).**

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## Labor Day

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DEP welcomes everyone back to work after the Labor Day weekend. We are grateful to the women and men, past and present, who have dedicated their time and energy to ensure that New Yorkers have clean, safe and reliable drinking water, have helped make our harbor cleaner than it has been in more than 100 years, work to enforce environmental regulations, help green New York City, and all of you who support [DEP's mission](#).

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## Urban Ecosystems

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Green infrastructure is intended to primarily help manage stormwater, but DEP is also closely monitoring the ancillary benefits of the installations, including temperature in the vicinity of bioswales, vegetation cover and visits by pollinators and other wildlife. On a recent visit to newly completed bioswales in Brownsville, we caught a butterfly exploring the varied plantings. Click on the above photo to watch the short video.

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## Mark Your Calendars

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**SEPTEMBER BLOOD DRIVE:** To help ensure that blood will be available to those who need it, DEP is hosting blood drives at the below locations and times.

Downsville Fire Hall, 9/9, 9:00am to 2:00pm; Sutton Park-2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 9/10, 8:30am to 2:30pm; Kingston, 51 Albany Avenue, 9/14 and 9/21, 1pm to 6pm.

**SMART WATER METERING TECHNOLOGIES:** DEP is sponsoring a Lunchtime Continuing Education technical skills webinar on Smart Water Metering Technologies. The program will be held at Lefrak Headquarters 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Learning Center on Wednesday, September 9, from 12pm to 1pm. External experts Michael Rotunno, P.E., and Steve Davis, P.E., will lead the presentation.

**FLU VACCINATION:** DEP employees will have the opportunity to receive a free flu vaccination at Lefrak Headquarters 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Lecture and Training Rooms on the following dates: 10/2, 8am to 4pm; 10/5, 11am to 2pm; and 10/7, 8am to 4pm. For additional information, please contact [ralfieri@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:ralfieri@dep.nyc.gov).