

## Listen Closely...



If you listen closely to this short video taken recently at Ashokan Reservoir, you can hear the sound of the ice moving. For those wishing to view the video outside of the office, you can watch it on our [Instagram account](#).

## Spotlight on Safety

### Suspension Trauma

Fall protection equipment is designed to save worker's lives. However, some fall protection PPE, such as a harness, can create dangerous health risks in certain situations. Workers suspended for too long in a harness may develop what is known as suspension trauma. Even in a short period of time, a harness can restrict the circulation of blood to the heart and brain. If a person loses consciousness while suspended in a harness it could create potentially fatal health problems so a safe

and prompt rescue is key to preventing suspension trauma. A suspended worker awaiting rescue should be monitored for faintness, breathlessness, sweating, paleness, nausea, dizziness, and loss of vision. If there is any delay in a rescue, instruct the suspended worker to pump their legs frequently to maintain blood flow.

OSHA requires workers using fall-arrest devices to be trained on how to use and fit them properly. For more information, visit [OSHA's Fall Protection site](#).

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



This week's snow storm turned out to be less significant than the record setting blizzard forecasters called for. However, it did present a terrific exercise in preparing for an emergency event. Across the five boroughs and throughout the watershed, DEP employees demonstrated their commitment to serving the nine million New Yorkers who rely on us each day.

At DEP Headquarters our Emergency Operations Center was up and running before New York City saw significant snowfall and a number of staff members from every bureau worked through the night and into Tuesday making sure we were prepared to respond to any and all emergency events. In addition to the staff working at headquarters, employees manned critical facilities throughout the watershed and in New York City.

In the watershed, the Water Supply Control Center was fully staffed and operational changes were made to reduce any potential impacts the high winds could have on water quality at Kensico Reservoir. In the city, water quality staff braved difficult driving conditions to ensure that drinking water samples were delivered to the lab. In addition, staff from DEP's Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) assisted in the effort by responding to sampling stations that froze during the storm.

BWSO crews also responded to a water main break at Kent Avenue near Division Avenue in Brooklyn and installed a stainless steel re-

pair clamp during the height of the storm, restoring water to all customers affected by the break.

At the City's wastewater treatment plants, crews also worked around the clock helping protect the health of our waterways, and more than 80 Bureau of Wastewater Treatment personnel helped plow snow at the plants and pumping stations, and supported DSNY plowing operations.

DEP Police also remained vigilant throughout the storm with nearly 40 officers posted at critical locations and senior members of service staffing the DEP Emergency Operations Center. In addition, the Office of Information Technology supported operations with laptops, radios, smartphones, and printers.

I would also like to extend a special thanks to Incident Commander and Deputy Commissioner **Jim Roberts** for leading DEP's response to the storm and **William Morris** and **Tami Lin** who represented DEP at the City's Emergency Operations Center at OEM. Their work ensured that we had adequate fuel supplies and that the agency's efforts were coordinated with the rest of City government.

Also, a special thanks to every DEP employee who made an effort to get to work despite the mass transit challenges and road conditions. At all levels of the agency, DEP employees demonstrated that we are prepared to deal with any emergency to ensure we continue to serve our customers. Again, thank you all.



## Driftwood For All at Ashokan



Last Friday, nearly 200 artists from across the watershed and from as far away as Rockland and Kings Counties participated in a driftwood giveaway at Ashokan Reservoir. Driftwood is a popular raw material that's often transformed into carvings, sculptures and even furniture. The artists are encouraged to share their finished works by posting photos of them to any social media site, using the hashtag #ashokandriftwood, or by posting a photo directly to DEP's watershed Facebook page at [facebook.com/NYCWatershed](https://facebook.com/NYCWatershed). See more photos from the giveaway [here](#).

## Hands-On Learning



Earlier this week, middle school students from Westchester County took a class visit to the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. Students toured parts of the facility and learned about NYC's water supply, the wastewater treatment systems and the threats posed by climate change.

## Volunteer Opportunity

This Saturday, January 31, the Department of Consumer Affairs is looking for 2,000 volunteers who will spend just two hours calling fellow New Yorkers with information about refundable tax credits and free tax preparation. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are missing out on up to \$10,000 in tax credits, like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Care Tax Credit. Though the EITC is considered one of the most effective programs to reduce poverty, about one in five eligible working families in New York City fail to claim their money because they simply don't know about these programs.

You can sign up here for a shift in your preferred borough/location and you can contact the EITC Day of Action team with any questions at [Volunteer@dca.nyc.gov](mailto:Volunteer@dca.nyc.gov).

## Free Trip Upstate



In cooperation with The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, DEP is helping manage Arctic Snowy Owls that are found wintering at New York City Airports. The airport habitat resembles the open tundra regions where the owls originate and the Port Authority and its contractor are responsible for live-trapping the Snowy Owls to keep them away from arriving and departing aircraft. They are then handed over to DEP wildlife biologist and licensed bander Christopher Nadareski, who relocates the owls away from airport property to avoid aircraft strikes. Last Friday, a Snowy Owl was captured at JFK Airport, [transported to Ulster County](#) and successfully released back into the wild.

## Welcome Aboard!



On Monday, 25 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from First Deputy Commissioner **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

**Michael Farella, Stephen Paul, Komitige Perera, Junior Pryce, Brian Reyes, Anthony Semonella, Mark Stagnaro and Demetrius Taylor** with BWT; **Deyonka Baines, Khrystyna Machalaba, Shyqeri Malziu, George Quinonez and Joshua Zumbado** with BWSO; **Demiana Bergas, Eric Robert and Richard Walton** with BWS; **Melinda Clancy, Alexy Larroy and Elizabeth Mamer** with Sustainability; **Nancy Cianflone and Yanitza Ruiz** with BCS; **Chaandi McGruder and Lisa Sofio** with BLA; **Carolyne Baldassano** with BEC; and **Brian O'Reilly** with BEDC.

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