

## Commissioner's Corner

DEP has officially launched the [Ashokan Century Program](#), a \$750 million plan to upgrade water supply infrastructure at Ashokan Reservoir. The comprehensive, multi-year capital program will include upgrades to the dam, dikes, chambers and other facilities at Ashokan Reservoir, which has provided clean drinking water to all five boroughs of New York City for exactly 100 years. The program—which comprises the largest public works project in the Catskills in more than 50 years—was officially funded this month in New York City **Mayor Bill de Blasio's** capital budget.

The program will include upgrades to practically every piece of infrastructure that impounds or conveys water at Ashokan Reservoir, along with a bridge and a historic monument. Construction of the projects is expected to begin sometime around the year 2023. Engineers will be-

gin to design the project next year. Later this summer, local residents and visitors should expect to see some preliminary construction and investigation work that will gather information needed for the design process. This will include soil and bedrock sampling, infrastructure inspections and other analyses. Exact details on each project will not be available until the design work is completed. Work on the myriad projects that comprise the Ashokan Century Program is expected to last approximately 10 years.

The Ashokan Century Program will include the following work:

- **Olive Bridge Dam and Ashokan Reservoir dikes:** DEP will perform a number of tasks at the Olive Bridge Dam and the many dikes that impound water at the reservoir. This will include structural upgrades, the installation of



modern drainage and monitoring equipment, and the clearing of undesirable vegetation. The dam and dikes at Ashokan Reservoir total approximately 29,000 linear feet, more than the dams of all New York City's other drinking water reservoirs combined.

- **Ashokan Reservoir spillway:** DEP will reconstruct the spillway and spillway channel.
- **Dividing Weir Bridge:** The bridge that carries Reservoir Road over Ashokan will be completely reconstructed. The new bridge will include two travel lanes, shoulders, and a pedestrian/bike lane that will connect DEP's existing walkway on the south side of the reservoir with the future rail trail being developed by Ulster County.
- **Ashokan Reservoir headworks:** The headworks are three masonry buildings that contain valves, gates and tunnels that convey water from Ashokan Reservoir into the Catskill Aqueduct. Under this program the superstructures will be rehabilitated, and many of the gates and valves will be replaced with modern equipment.
- **J. Waldo Smith Monument:** The monument was used as a triangulation tower during construction of Ashokan Reservoir, allowing surveyors to take thousands of accurate measurements. The stone tower was later rededicated as a monument to J. Waldo Smith, the chief engineer who oversaw construction of the entire Catskill Water Supply System. The monument and its adjacent lands will be reha-

bilitated as a central location for public education and recreation.

The Ashokan Century Program is part of DEP's continuing efforts to upgrade dams and other key facilities that provide 1.1 billion gallons of drinking water every day to 8.5 million people in New York City and another one million people in four counties north of the City. That effort began nearly three decades ago. Beginning in the 1990s DEP rehabilitated a number of dams that are part of its Croton Water Supply System in Putnam and Westchester counties. In 2014, DEP completed the \$138 million full-scale rehabilitation of Gilboa Dam at Schoharie Reservoir. DEP continues to work on other elements of the upgrade program at Schoharie Reservoir, including the construction of a new release works and a rehabilitation of the reservoir's intake chamber.

Ashokan Reservoir provides about 40 percent of New York City's drinking water each day. It impounds 128 billion gallons of water at full capacity. The reservoir collects rainwater and melting snow from a 255-square-mile watershed that includes part of 11 towns in Ulster, Greene and Delaware counties. The reservoir conveys that drinking water to New York City through the 92-mile Catskill Aqueduct.

The Ashokan Century Program underscores New York City's commitment to keep its water supply infrastructure in a state of good repair for generations to come. More than

## Spotlight on Safety

### 2017 National Safety Council Congress & Expo

The National Safety Council (NSC) is a nonprofit organization with the mission of eliminating preventable deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. The NSC Congress & Expo brings together the world's largest gathering of safety professionals annually. It provides a great opportunity for DEP employees to gain industry leading knowledge which they can apply to DEP's health and safety programs and operations.

The 2017 NSC Congress & Expo will take place September 23-29 in Indianapolis with the theme "Racing to Zero—Safety that Works". This year's event offers

networking opportunities with more than 15,000 professionals who are at the forefront of safety. Events include an Executive Forum focusing on "Serious Injury & Fatality Preventions" and a motivational keynote speaker. It will also feature 25 Professional Development Seminars designed to help enhance overall safety efforts, as well as more than 100 Technical Sessions. The Expo Floor will host 1,100 exhibitors showcasing both innovative and tried-and-true safety products and solutions, as well as the 2017 "Best in Show" New Product Showcase.

Advance registration ends August 18th! For more information, visit [NSC's 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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#### (Commissioner's Corner... continued)

100 years ago, a group of public servants and brilliant engineers set out with a clear goal—to build the greatest water supply in human history. When construction of the Catskill Water Supply System was completed, those same engineers recapped their work in a report that said the system could last for ages if its infrastructure was monitored and periodically upgraded. The

Ashokan Century Program heeds the advice of those who built the water supply, and it makes good on our mission to protect public health and safety long into the future.

I'd like to thank the employees of BWS and BEDC who are working collaboratively to get this program started as work to support the design phase begins this summer.

## Press Box



### DECOMMISSIONED SLUDGE BOAT HOSTS UNDERWATER POKER GAME

The decommissioned M/V Newtown Creek sludge boat, which is now a casino-themed diving attraction in Pompano Beach, Fla., hosted an underwater Texas Hold 'Em poker tournament on July 23. A half dozen divers descended upon the sunken vessel, since renamed Lady Luck, to showcase their card shark skills using clay chips and plastic cards made by Isle Casino Racing Pompano Park, which was one of the sponsors of the ship's sinking last year at Shipwreck Park. The winner received a trophy and will be the first diver on the sinking of the ship Okinawa, scheduled for Aug. 18.

## Formula E Race Recognizes NYC Water



New York City tap water received a shout-out as "the best in the country" at the inaugural Qualcomm New York City ePrix race held July 15 and 16 at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal in Red Hook. Formula E is the world's first fully-electric single-seater racing series, and the New York City ePrix was the first FIA-sanctioned open-wheel race to take place in the five boroughs in modern history. The Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations' North Brooklyn Sewers unit helped prepare the area surrounding the race by inspecting all nearby catch basins and cleaning them as needed. Since the City launched its own clean fleet initiative in late 2015, DEP has deployed nearly 80 fully-electric or plug-in-optional vehicles—with plans to purchase only electric vehicles for all future non-emergency sedans—and has installed enough stations throughout the city and upstate to charge over 130 cars simultaneously.

## Progress Continues on Bypass Tunnel



DEP continues to make progress on the Delaware Aqueduct Bypass Tunnel, the largest repair project in the 175-year history of New York City's water supply. Construction crews are currently working 845 feet below the ground in Newburgh, N.Y. as they prepare for the start of tunnel boring. At the bottom of a shaft there, workers have built a bell-out chamber where the tunnel boring machine will be assembled and tunnel spoils will be lifted to the surface by a large crane. They have also begun to drill and blast a starter tunnel into the bedrock so that it's ready for the tunnel boring machine next month. Construction of the starter tunnel is akin to tapping a nail into wood before you begin hammering it—it gets the tunnel set and pointed in the direction that the tunnel will be drilled. The 2.5-mile bypass tunnel will be constructed 600 feet below the Hudson River, from Orange County to Dutchess County, to eliminate the largest of two leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct.

## Staten Island Rain Barrel Giveaway



DEP on Saturday joined New York State Senator Andrew Lanza, Council Member Joe Borelli, Borough President James Oddo, Assemblyman Ron Castorina, Jr., and to distribute rain barrels to approximately 320 homeowners on the South Shore of Staten Island. The 60-gallon rain barrels connect directly to a property owner's downspout and the collected stormwater can be used to water lawns and gardens. Rain barrels can help reduce a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months. They also help to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the City's sewer system, which helps to protect the health of numerous local waterways, including Lemon Creek, Mill Creek, Arbutus Creek, Richmond Creek, the Arthur Kill, Great Kills Harbor and Prince's Bay. Saturday's event was held at Blue Heron Park in Annadale and the rain barrels were provided free of charge.

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