

Season's Greetings



Dear Colleagues,

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your dedicated service to our agency. Collectively, we made important strides this year towards further enriching the environment and protecting public health.

On behalf of the entire senior leadership team and the extended DEP family, I sincerely hope that you have a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season and coming new year. Very best wishes to you and yours!

Best regards,

Vinny

[*Click here to view pictures from the various holiday parties held over the last month.*](#)

Spotlight on Safety

Electrical Extension Cord Safety

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that each year, about 4,000 injuries associated with electric extension cords are treated in hospital emergency rooms. About half the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions, or sprains from people tripping over extension cords. In addition, CPSC estimates that about 3,300 residential fires originate in extension cords each year, killing 50 people and injuring about 270 others. The most frequent causes of such fires are short circuits, overloading, damage, and/or misuse of extension cords.

To protect ourselves from extension cord hazards, both on and off the job:

- Use extension cords only when necessary and only on a temporary

basis. Do not use extension cords in place of permanent wiring.

- Use extension cords that are the correct size or rating for the equipment in use.
- Choose extension cords with polarized or three-prong plugs.
- Never unplug an extension cord by pulling on the cord; pull on the plug.
- Don't run extension cords through doorways, holes in ceilings, walls, or floors.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs or carpets or in high traffic areas.

For more information visit the OSHA [Construction e-Tools on Flexible Cords](#) and [Electrical Safety Foundation International'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.

Commissioner's Corner



Vincent Sapienza
Commissioner

Work is underway on a \$300 million project to install new, cleaner-burning co-generation engines at the North River Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility in west Harlem. Once that work is completed in 2022, there will be a nearly 50 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. This is comparable to the air quality benefits achieved by removing 5,500 vehicles from the road or planting nearly 700,000 trees. By replacing the 10 existing engines that rely on traditional fuel oil with engines that primarily use green energy, the project will help contribute towards the [City's 80 x 50 goal](#) (PDF). In addition, over 6,500 lighting fixtures at the facility have been upgraded with energy-saving LED capability, and resiliency measures, such as floodgates and barriers, will be installed to help protect critical equipment from future storm surges and help to ensure uninterrupted service.

At the North River Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF), the existing large engines burn a combination of traditional fuel oil, natural gas and recovered green energy, or digester gas, that is a byproduct of the wastewater treatment process. The engines power the primary energy consumers at the facility, the main sewage pumps and process air blowers. Those 10 engines are being replaced with five new dual-fuel cogeneration engines that primarily use digester gas,

supplemented by natural gas, thus eliminating the use of traditional fuel oil at the facility.

The new cogeneration system will maximize the use of digester gas to produce up to 12 megawatts of electricity and will have the ability to take the facility off the electrical grid to ease pressure during times of high demand. The work, which is being staggered in order to ensure uninterrupted service, represents the first major upgrade to the North River facility since it went into operation in 1986.

DEP is also completing a multi-million dollar project to upgrade over 6,500 lights at the North River facility to be compatible with LED fixtures. This work reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with the operation of the facility by over 1,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, which is comparable to removing over 230 vehicles from the road or planting nearly 29,000 trees. In addition, the upgrade reduces annual operating costs by more than \$300,000.

This \$300 million investment to install new, cleaner-burning co-generation engines at the North River WRRF will not only ensure that we continue to protect the health of the Hudson River, it increases the sustainability of our essential operations and improves the quality of the air we all share. As we continue to transition our wastewater treatment plants into resource recovery facilities, we anticipate delivering additional benefits for the environment and our neighbors and customers.



Memorial Erected at Penn & Fountain



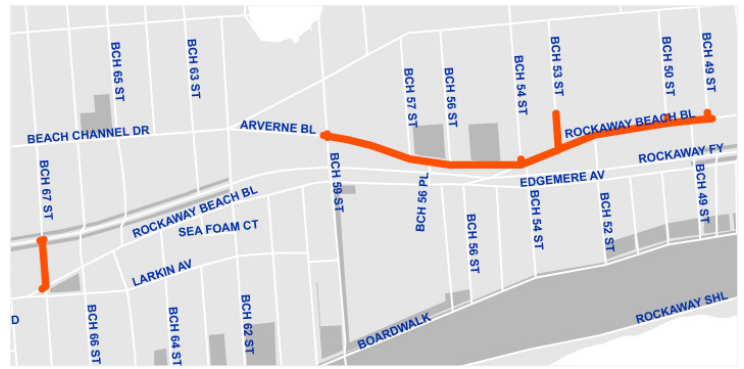
DEP recently participated in a tree planting and plaque dedication ceremony at Penn and Fountain Park, Brooklyn, in memory of Leander “Lee” Shelley, the past president of Friends of Penn and Fountain Parks, Inc. DEP had worked with Lee’s organization over the years as the agency transformed the degraded 407-acre sites from former landfills into ecologically productive habitat and badly needed publicly accessible parkland in an underserved community. The ceremony, which included the planting of a red oak sapling, was attended by Shelley’s family and friends, **John McLaughlin**, **Patrick O’Connor** and **Jackie Chen**, from the Bureau of Environmental Planning & Analysis, **Karen Ellis**, from the Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications, member of Friends of Penn and Fountain Parks, Inc., representatives from the National Parks Service and others. “Lee was not only a friend to all of us here, but he was a friend to the community,” McLaughlin fondly recalled at the dedication. “The red oak tree is being planted for Lee because it stands for leadership, loyalty, friendship—all of the qualities that he had.” Also assisting to help set up the ceremony and ensure it went smoothly were **Bob Lagrotta**, **Walter Goyzueta**, and **Rolando Villacres** from the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment. The site, recently renamed the Shirley Chisholm State Park, underwent a \$235 million remediation that included the installation of an impermeable cap and below-ground barrier to support future recreational use.

Food Drive Helps Feed the Needy



A tremendous thank you to all DEP employee who donated to this year’s successful food drive. At **Lefrak**, 29 cases of food were collected and given to the NYC Food Bank to provide some relief to NYC families. Residents in several watershed communities also had a brighter Thanksgiving thanks to the generosity of BWS employees. Food donations gathered in the **Kingston** office went to the Ulster County Community Action Committee; the **Grahamsville** office donated their items to the Ulster Heights and Grahamsville United Methodist churches; and **Downsville** employees collected at least 15 pounds of butter to help complete baskets put together by the Colchester Community Food Bank.

\$31 Million Upgrade for Far Rockaway



DEP, the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) recently joined Council Member **Donovan Richards** to break ground on a **\$31 million project** that will bring street and infrastructure improvements to the Rockaway Beach Boulevard/Arverne Boulevard area in Far Rockaway. The project, which is being managed by DDC for DEP and DOT, is scheduled to be completed in summer 2021. The project will upgrade the water distribution system in the area, as well as the storm sewers and sanitary sewers. Additionally, impacted streets will be regraded to reduce ponding and then reconstructed with new asphalt, new concrete sidewalks and new steel-faced concrete curbs. New street lighting will be also be installed and traffic signals will be updated. The project will also upgrade fire protection in the area, with seven new fire hydrants added and ten old fire hydrants replaced with newer models. The FDNY communication system on Rockaway Beach Boulevard will also be updated.

Donated Toys Make Kids Smile



DEP employees once again generously donated toys for needy children during this year’s holiday season. Almost 700 toys were collected at **Lefrak** and presented to the Girl Scouts of Greater New York Troop 6000 and the Greater New York Council Boy Scouts of America (these two programs service children in the NYC Shelter System), as well as the Elmhurst Hospital’s Pediatrics’ Department. Upstate, collections were held at the **Kingston**, **Shokan** and **Grahamsville** facilities, among other locations, with collected toys, gifts, and gift cards presented to various community organizations including Sullivan County Head Start Inc., an early childhood development program primarily serving low-income children, and Christmas Wishes Ulster County, a not-for-profit organization that provides for hundreds of needy children/teens throughout Ulster County. Employees in the **Downsville Region** supported the Downsville Central School Alumni Association’s “Santa’s Helpers Program,” which collects new toys and clothes for underprivileged children in the area. The toys donated through these collections most certainly brought smiles to children of all ages! Thank you to all who made donations, and to the bureau coordinators who helped make this a successful drive.

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