

Value Ambassador Program

Over the next 8 months, Weekly Pipeline will be highlighting DEP's core values by launching the Value Ambassador program. As part of the program, this month we are celebrating the value of Innovation with a column from Deputy Commissioner **Pam Elardo**. In addition, we are asking our colleagues to nominate their peers who through their work best represent Innovation at DEP. Finally, during the last week of each month, we will highlight the chosen employee with a Focus on the Field article that discusses their work.

The upcoming schedule is: November—Innovation; December—Support; January—Diversity, February—Service; March—Integrity; April—Sustainability; May—Transparency; June—Safety.



This month, DEP is celebrating our value of innovation. If you know someone who embodies this value, please send an email by November 20 to values@dep.nyc.gov and include the name of who you are nominating, their bureau, and a brief description of how they embody this value.

Spotlight on Safety

EHS Insights: Driving at Night



Persis Luke
Assistant Commissioner
Environmental, Health
and Safety

There are several factors that affect drivers' ability to drive in the dark such as fatigue, insufficient light, bad vision, distraction, and other impaired drivers. Since DEP is a 24/7 operation, some employees are required to operate agency vehicles at night. To minimize the risk of driving at night vehicle operators should:

- get a quality sleep/rest prior to driving—adults should get at least 7 hours of sleep
- inspect vehicles to ensure all lighting systems are functional and headlights are clean

- ensure vision and visibility is not compromised
- dim dashboards
- look away from oncoming lights
- avoid distractions in and around the vehicle
- be patient and follow traffic patterns, especially in unfamiliar areas

It does not matter whether the road is familiar or not, driving at night is always more dangerous. Drive safely—extra precautions always help. Stay Alert, Stay Alive!

For more information on safe driving at night, visit the [National Safety Council](#) and [National Sleep Foundation](#) websites.

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. HELP IS ON THE WAY.

Special Guest Commissioner's Corner



Pam Elardo
Deputy Commissioner
Wastewater Treatment

Innovation is one of DEP's core values and is a fundamental principle that guides how we approach and deliver on our mission to best serve our employees and all New Yorkers.

In the wastewater utility world, we are in the midst of interesting times. Faced with rapidly evolving treatment and information technologies; growing recognition of the need to increase the sustainability of our operations; and the challenge of aging infrastructure, we have a unique opportunity to rethink the basic building blocks of how we treat, manage, and plan for our city's daily dose of 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater.

Innovation comes in many forms and can happen on many levels.

One form of innovation resides in the hearts and minds of every person in the field and those of us who support them. There is no shortage of ingenuity in the people who run our facilities; everyday, they find innovative ways to ensure we make clean water, produce biogas, and keep employees and the public safe. This is just the way we do business, and it is time to celebrate the individuals and teams who truly demonstrate the value of innovation.

Another form comes from our goal to transition fully to Wastewater Resource Recovery Facilities (WRRFs). Utilities across the globe are moving from being handlers of wastewater to creators of valuable and sustainable resources, and DEP is joining that movement. BWT is embracing our role in resource recovery, and since we create green energy, excel in energy conservation, and have opportunities for carbon sequestration, BWT is certainly a leader in achieving the Mayor's sustainability goals.

To advance this form of innovation, we must build a stronger understanding of the underlying fun-



damentals of materials science, chemistry, and biology so we can engineer novel systems to convert what were perceived as pollutants into valuable renewable resources. To structurally advance innovative practices, BWT is developing a Research and Development Plan that will further transform DEP to a national hub of innovation by leveraging academic partnerships with the City's many universities, allowing them to produce new knowledge needed to create WRRFs of the future, and developing the team within DEP that will design, operate, and maintain them.

A key component of this effort is to invite BWT staff at all levels—from operations to engineering, and everyone in between—to contribute towards the research program. To be successful and sustainable, we must enhance our internal know-how, allowing us to insource some critical technical functions that have historically been contracted out.

The future is at our doorsteps for our City's wastewater, and to be prepared and successful in meeting our mission, we need to invest in steps today. Let's allow our collective ingenuity to bubble up from people at all levels, and let's gear our capital investments to the future by adopting proven industry-standard technologies that enhance operations, reliably meet compliance requirements, reduce risks, and lower operating costs. And let's do this all together! By ensuring that all levels of our organization directly participate in driving the implementation of new technology, we will be able meet the goals set forth in DEP's [Strategic Plan](#).

Southest Queens Update



Commissioner Sapienza recently joined with Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner **Lorraine Grillo** to update elected officials, homeowners and businesses in southeast Queens on the de Blasio Administration's historic commitment of \$1.9 billion to continue the buildout of a drainage system to alleviate flooding in neighborhoods throughout the area. Thus far, roughly 20 percent of the funding has been committed to 10 completed projects and another 10 that are currently under construction. An additional 25 projects are currently in the planning and design phase and will break ground in the coming years. Neighborhoods receiving upgraded drainage systems include St. Albans, Rosedale, Jamaica, Laurelton and Springfield Gardens, among others. The buildout of the drainage system in southeast Queens is a collaboration between DEP, DDC and the Department of Transportation.

The post-World War II residential and commercial development of southeast Queens outpaced the construction of vital public infrastructure, including storm sewers. For decades, residents have lived with the constant worry of the next

storm and the resulting property damage and unsafe roadway conditions it would cause. To address the long-standing concerns of residents and business owners, in 2015 **Mayor de Blasio** announced the allocation of funds to accelerate the construction of a drainage system for the area.

The bulk of the funding will go towards the construction of large trunk sewer spines along 150th Street, Guy Brewer Boulevard, Farmers Boulevard, and Springfield Boulevard. The first of those projects just recently broke ground. Dozens of local sewer projects will connect neighborhoods to the trunk sewer spines. Bluebelts are also being constructed to help manage stormwater at Springfield Lake, Baisley Pond, Twin Ponds, and Brookville Triangle.

Funding is also going towards projects that can deliver flooding relief more quickly than the large sewer construction projects. This includes smaller sewer extensions to relieve flooding on a block-by-block basis, and the addition of green infrastructure along roadways and at City schools, playgrounds and at New York City Housing Authority facilities.



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

DEP Police Launch New Chopper

Commissioner Sapienza recently joined with Deputy Commissioner **Kevin McBride** and fellow officers from the Bureau of Police and Security to cut the ribbon on the agency's new high-tech helicopter. The chopper, dubbed Air 6, has a hi-def infrared and video camera combo with recording capabilities, a tracking spotlight/floodlight, external loudspeakers, and siren, and a moving map system—



making it a vital resource for patrolling the watershed. It also has the capability to fight fires using a belly-mounted hook for a Bambi Bucket. The DEP Police Division was established more than 100 years ago. Its approximately 220 sworn members are charged with protecting the city's water supply system, which includes more than 2,000 square miles of watershed land across nine counties, hundreds of miles of tunnels and aqueducts, 14 wastewater treatment plants, laboratories, and chlorination facilities. DEP police patrol the watershed by foot, bicycle, all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle, boat and helicopter. The department maintains specially trained units that include an aviation unit, emergency services unit, marine patrol, K-9 patrol, and detective bureau

80 Years of Maritime Excellence



BWT Marine Operations celebrated 80 years of service this past summer and although the ships and personnel are different, the commitment to maritime tradition remains the same. The first three vessels, built in 1938, were named after newly constructed Wastewater Treatment plants: Wards Island, Tallman Island and Coney Island. These treatment plants, along with the conveyance of sludge to deep waters of the ocean by ship, began the monumental work of restoring the ecological health of local waterways. Eighty years later, many aspects of the Marine Operations and Maintenance Section have changed—most notably that the Ocean Ban Act of 1992 prohibited the dumping of sludge at sea and a fleet of smaller skimmer vessels now maintain combined sewer

overflow sites scattered across the city's shoreline. The unit has recently witnessed unprecedented growth in personnel, the fleet and supporting infrastructure, including a wave of capital improvements for docks and marinas that are utilized every day by staff. An anticipated 94 person allocation in 2018 marks the highest number of employees in the Marine Section's history. And, with staff hailing from 11 different countries, it is the most diverse group in generations. The success of the Marine Section can be attributed to common goals, professional values and a superior skill set that is demonstrated each and every day by the employees assigned to the unit. For a more detailed history on the Marine Operations and Maintenance Section, [continue reading on Medium](#).