



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

September 27, 2013

No. 102

**30 NEW ENVIRONMENTAL POLICE OFFICERS JOIN RANKS TO PROTECT  
WATER SUPPLY FOR MORE THAN NINE MILLION NEW YORKERS**

*DEP Police Protect Drinking Water Supply and Critical Infrastructure for Nearly Half of State's Residents*

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today presided over a graduation ceremony for 30 new Environmental Police Officers (EPO) who completed 31 weeks of training at DEP's Environmental Police Academy. The officers will immediately be deployed to protect a 2,000 square mile watershed and critical infrastructure across nine counties that supply roughly half of New York State's population with reliable, high quality drinking water. This year's class is one of the most diverse in the history of the academy, first launched in 2002, as the first-of-its-kind in the nation to provide training and concentrated course work in advanced environmental law. The new graduates, who reside in 12 different counties and speak seven different languages, completed training in police science, the use of firearms, and counterterrorism. In addition, the new police officers completed courses in environmental conservation law, land navigation, fish and wildlife science, and watershed protection. Today's ceremony took place at the Ulster Performing Arts Center in Kingston, NY. This class brings the DEP police force to 211 sworn members.

"Reliable, safe, and high quality drinking water is the lifeblood of New York City," said Commissioner Strickland. "I am proud to welcome our newest class of Environmental Police Officers to the ranks of a force with more than a century of tradition and accomplishment."

Originally from the United States, China, and India, and fluent in Albanian, Cantonese, Italian, Malayalam and Tamil, Ukrainian, Mandarin, and Spanish, the new class brings cultural diversity and essential skills to the DEP Police force. The graduating class named EPO Thomas Curran as the class leader and EPO Nicola Cavallo, EPO Christopher Correa, and EPO John Little as squad leaders. During the graduation ceremony several EPOs were recognized for their outstanding performance during the more than seven months of training. EPO Michael Nasti received the Academic Proficiency Award; EPO John Rispoli received the Firearms Proficiency Award; and EPO Curran received the Physical Fitness and Best Overall Officer Awards.

The complete list of graduates and their home counties:

Liridon Ahmedi, Suffolk; Corey Ashe, Putnam; Ethan Berghammer, Delaware; Joseph Brites, Suffolk; James Carpitella, Suffolk; Nicola Cavallo, Delaware; Christian Chaparro, Orange; Huanxin Chen, Kings; Christopher Correa, Orange; Emanuel Crespo, Kings; Thomas Curran, Putnam; Christopher Guziczek, Westchester; Gregory Kelemen, Orange; Vincent

Lahara, Queens; John Little, Delaware; Andrew Mattson, Delaware; Alvin Mckinney, Westchester; John Miller, Putnam; Spencer Moore, Columbia; Michael Nasti, Westchester; Jermaine Patterson, Westchester; Wendy Perroth, Richmond; Tamara Raczynsky, Queens; John Rispoli, Dutchess; Robert Rohr, Westchester; Sachin Scaria, Kings; Steven Speca, Orange; Peter Viti, Dutchess; Joseph Zane, Westchester; Richard Zimmer, Bronx.

The Bureau of Water Supply (BWS) Police was originally created through legislation enacted in the 1906 Water Supply Act. It was not until 1907 that the first provisional appointees were hired and assigned and, on July 9, 1908, the first permanent police officers were appointed and assigned to precincts in Peekskill, Garrison, Browns Station, and High Falls. The BWS Police force was the first in upstate New York with a multi-county jurisdiction. In 1983, the Bureau of Water Supply became the Department of Environmental Protection and the New York State Legislature revised New York Criminal Procedure Law to include DEP police officers. In 1999, DEP jurisdiction was extended to include the five boroughs of New York City. In 2004, the highest court in the state, the New York State Court of Appeals, affirmed the DEP Police Department's jurisdiction throughout the watershed. The DEP Police Department maintains jurisdiction in 14 counties, including the five boroughs of New York City, and its members are New York State certified police officers. The department has full-time Aviation and Emergency Services Units, Marine and K-9 Patrols, and a Detective Bureau.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).