

[Home](#)
Customer Services

- › [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- › [Account Information](#)
- › [Customer Assistance](#)
- › [Service Line Protection Program](#)
- › [Water Rates](#)
- › [Property Managers & Trade Professionals](#)

Water Utilities

- › [Drinking Water](#)
- › [Wastewater](#)
- › [Stormwater](#)
- › [Harbor Water](#)
- › [Long Term Control Plan](#)

The Watershed

- › [Watershed Protection](#)
- › [Watershed Recreation](#)

Citywide Initiatives

- › [Regulatory Reform](#)
- › [Environmental Education](#)
- › [Conservation Programs](#)
- › [Air Pollution Control](#)
- › [Noise Codes & Complaints](#)

Business and Professionals

- › [Forms & Permits](#)
- › [Economic Development Unit](#)
- › [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- › [Asbestos Abatement](#)
- › [Construction, Demolition & Abatement](#)

About DEP

- › [Inside DEP](#)
- › [News](#)
- DEP Featured In...
- Stories from DEP
- Press Releases
- Public Notices
- Testimony & Public Comments

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Department of Environmental Protection Makes More Than \$5 Million Available to Community Groups, Non-Profits, and Property Owners for Green Projects

Green Infrastructure Helps Clean the Air, Improve the Health of Local Waterways and Enhance Community Life – Photos of Completed Projects are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

Preference for Grants Will be Given to Projects that Engage Local Communities in Environmental Awareness through Educational Efforts and Green Job Training

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd today encouraged community groups, non-profits, and property owners to apply for the more than \$5 million in new funding that the department is making available for green projects through the 2014 Green Infrastructure Grant Program. DEP is engaged in a citywide effort to soften the impervious urban landscape to help absorb rainwater that would otherwise drain into the combined sewer system and contribute to combined sewer overflows into local waterways. Through the grant program, funding is provided for the design and construction of projects, such as green and blue roofs, rain gardens and permeable pavers, which will reduce or manage a minimum of one inch of stormwater that falls on the selected properties. Those wishing to apply for funding can review conceptual ideas with DEP engineers prior to submitting their application, which must be done by November 13. More information and the application can be found on the [DEP website](#).

“New York City is a world leader in protecting the natural environment and fighting climate change and we encourage community groups and non-profits from across the city to apply for the \$5 million in new funding we have made available to build green infrastructure projects,” said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. “Investing in green infrastructure is a cost-effective way to improve the health of our local waterways, clean the air, green the landscape, increase shade and cool temperatures during the summer while also engaging all New Yorkers in the important work of protecting the environment.”

This is the fourth year of the Green Infrastructure Grant Program and, earlier this year, DEP committed funding for a rooftop farm in Woodside and a green roof in Fort Greene. During the first three years of the program, DEP has committed over \$11 million to fund 29 different projects, which was matched by \$5.6 million in private funds. In total, the projects will prevent an estimated 13 million gallons of stormwater from entering the combined sewer system each year. All private property owners served by combined sewers in New York City are eligible to apply for a green infrastructure grant. If selected, DEP will reimburse up to 100

More Information

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- › [Capital Projects](#)
- › [Careers at DEP](#)
- › [Environmental Reviews](#)
- › [Interagency MOUs](#)
- › [A to Z Index](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)



percent of the design and construction costs for the green infrastructure project. Preference will be given to projects that are located in [priority watersheds](#), are cost-effective, provide matching funds or other contributions, and include ancillary environmental and community benefits such as increased shade, decreased energy use for cooling buildings, increased awareness about stormwater management, and green jobs development.

Notable projects that were funded during the first three years of the Grant Program and have completed construction include a 43,400 square foot rooftop farm at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, one of the nation's first blue/green roof combinations at The Osborne Association in the Bronx, a green roof at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House in Manhattan, permeable pavers and rain gardens at Queens College, a New York Restoration Project community garden in Brooklyn's Gowanus neighborhood, and a green roof at Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in Fort Greene.

DEP will host three workshops to explain the eligibility requirements and guide users through the online application. A fourth technical workshop will be held at DEP headquarters to provide support in computing stormwater calculations and to review conceptual ideas with DEP engineers prior to submitting an application.

Bronx

October 16, 6:00-7:30PM

Bronx Courthouse – 265 East 161st Street

Brooklyn

October 21, 6:00-7:30PM

High School for the Arts - Auditorium
345 Dean Street

Manhattan

October 22, 6:00-7:30PM

The Horticultural Society of New York
148 West 37th Street – 13th Floor

Queens

October 28, 2:00-5:00PM

DEP Headquarters
59-17 Junction Boulevard – 3rd Floor Cafeteria

* General workshop; technical workshop on stormwater calculations template; and open "office hours" with DEP engineers

In addition to the Grant Program for private properties, DEP has a large capital construction program that builds green infrastructure on city-owned property such as streets and sidewalks, schools, and parkland. DEP also has put in place stormwater management regulations for new development and redevelopments. Over the next two decades, DEP is planning for \$1.5 billion in public funding, and another \$900 million in funding connected to new development or redevelopment, for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as approximately \$2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce overflows and further improve the health of local waterways.

New York City, like other older urban communities, is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater that falls on roofs, streets, and sidewalks, and wastewater from homes and businesses, are carried through a single sewer line to treatment plants. The city's 14 treatment plants can manage and treat to federal Clean Water Act standards all the wastewater created in New York City on a dry weather day. However, during intense precipitation events, the stormwater that falls on pavement, rooftops, and other impervious surfaces exceeds that capacity and overflows can be discharged into local waterways. If the overflows were not discharged, the City's treatment plants would be flooded and severely damaged and wastewater could backup into homes and businesses.

Over the last decade DEP has invested more than \$10 billion to upgrade wastewater treatment plant capacity and related efforts to reduce combined

sewer overflows, and the cleanliness and health of New York City harbor water continues to improve to levels not seen in more than a century. However, overflows remain the city's primary harbor water quality challenge. As traditional "grey" infrastructure upgrades became increasingly expensive, DEP launched the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan, an alternative approach to improving harbor water quality that combines traditional infrastructure upgrades and the integration of green infrastructure to capture and retain stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system. The Plan has the ambitious goal of capturing the first inch of rain that falls on 10 percent of the city's impervious surfaces in combined sewer areas.

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 nearly \$14 billion in investments planned 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 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, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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