

## 2,000 Trees to Protect NYC Water



This fall, DEP planted more than 2,000 hardwood trees at a 4.5-acre site alongside Kensico Reservoir. This site was heavily damaged when a tornado touched down and skipped across the reservoir, ripping up trees on properties owned by the City and others. More than half the trees planted on the site came from the Greenbelt Native Plant Center on Staten Island. They were planted inside tubes, shown above, to prevent deer from eating them. To see more photos of the project, [click here](#).

## Spotlight on Safety

### Bhopal Chemical Release

December 2<sup>nd</sup> marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the worst industrial accident in history. A chemical release occurred at the Union Carbide Pesticide Plant in Bhopal, India in 1984 when water inadvertently entered a storage tank containing more than 80,000 pounds of Methyl Isocyanate (MIC), which reacts violently with water. The storage tank overheated and resulted in a massive toxic gas release. A dense, lethal cloud drifted over the city of Bhopal, exposing hundreds of thousands of people to deadly MIC and other chemicals. An estimated 3,800 people died immediately, and tens of thousands were injured and subsequently died from toxic gas-related illnesses.

In the wake of Bhopal, Congress enacted new laws to increase chemical emergency preparedness and required companies to develop process safety and risk management programs, and to report their worst-case release scenarios. Congress also established the Chemical Safety Board to independently investigate chemical accidents and recommend measures to prevent such catastrophic accidents.

For more information on process safety and risk management programs, visit: [Process Safety Management \(PSM\) of Highly Hazardous Chemicals Standard](#) and EPA's [Risk Management Plan Rule](#).

## Commissioner's Corner

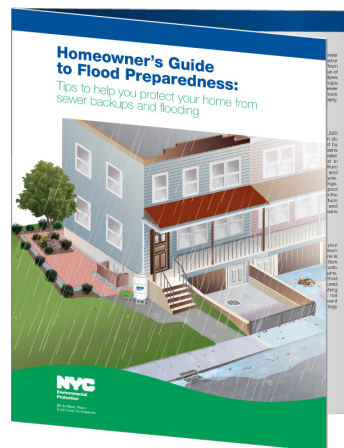
Today's Nor'easter presents a good opportunity to remind New Yorkers that DEP recently published a new guide to help homeowners protect their properties and valuables against flooding from heavy rainfall and sewer back-ups. DEP's *Homeowner's Guide to Flood Preparedness* provides information about some of the common causes of flooding and tips about flooding solutions that range from installing check valves that prevent water from backing up through connections to the local sewer system to installing barriers to block water from flowing into low lying driveways. It also includes simpler fixes, such as reducing the amount of paved area on a property, clearing catch basins ahead of storms, regularly maintaining sewer connections, and installing proper roof drainage and downspouts.



The guide builds upon an extensive public outreach campaign to inform New Yorkers about one of the leading causes of sewer back-ups—the improper disposal of grease from cooking oil. Over the past year, grease buildup accounted for more than 70 percent of confirmed sewer backups. The outreach campaign began last year and included the development of a public service announcement video, door to door canvassing in neighborhoods with recurring grease buildup in the sewers, and a year-long collaboration with the New York City Housing Authority to provide intensive educational outreach about the proper disposal of used cooking oil.

In addition to public outreach, DEP is investing billions of dollars to increase the capacity of the sewers and extend the system to underserved neighborhoods. Over the last decade, DEP has invested more than \$2.5 billion to upgrade sewers citywide, with approximately \$500 million dedicated to improving the drainage system in Queens, where post-World War II commercial and residential development outpaced the extension of the City's sewer system and many neighborhoods are not yet equipped with catch basins or storm sewers to drain precipitation from the roadways.

For more information about protecting your property from flooding, download the new guide [here](#).



The new flood preparedness guide was rolled out last spring at a meeting of nearly 300 members of the Empowered Queens United in Action and Leadership (EQUAL) organization at St. Catherine's Catholic Church in Saint Albans. EQUAL is made up of congregations located in South East Queens, Sunnyside and Woodside. Tomorrow I will join members of EQUAL and local elected officials to announce a recently completed upgrade to the drainage infrastructure in St. Alban's Queens that should help reduce flooding during intense rainfall.

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.

## December Blood Drive



The Greater New York Blood Program is experiencing a serious shortage due to a fall-off in donations. To help ensure that blood will be available to those who need it, DEP is hosting blood drives at the below locations and times.

**Downsville Region Area:** Downsville Fire Hall, 12/10, 9:00am to 2:00pm; **Kensico/Highland Regions - Sutton Park Area:** Sutton Park-2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 12/11, 8:30am to 2:30pm; **Grahamsville Region Area:** United Methodist Church, 12/18 and 12/19, 10:00am to 3:00pm.

## Holiday Toy Drive



Bring a smile to a child by donating new and unwrapped toys during DEP's Holiday Toy Drive. Toys can be dropped off at [LeFrak](#) headquarters as well as the offices in [Downsville](#), [Grahamsville](#), [Kingston](#), [Schoharie](#), [Shokan](#) and [Valhalla](#). Please click on the link for each office to get more information, including preferred items for donation. Thank you for helping to make the holidays brighter for those in need.

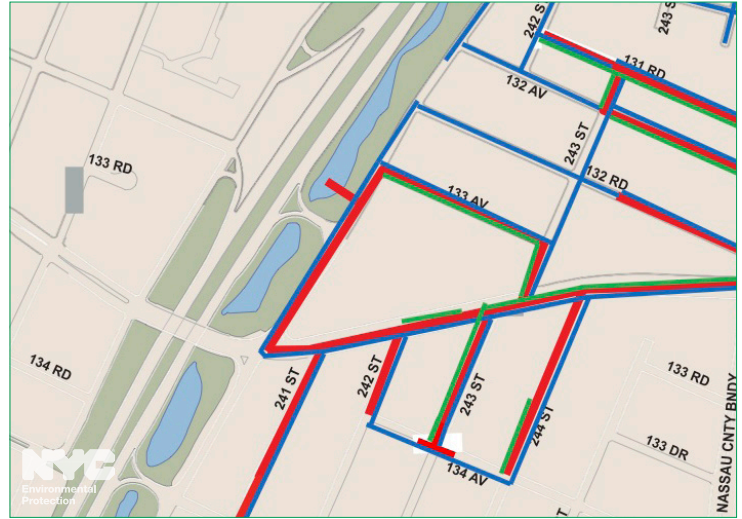
## Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 19 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from First Deputy Commissioner **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

**Richard Aquirre, Al'Lear Conde, Paul DeFilippis, Thomas D'Albora, Snyder Joseph, Joseph Lobello, Frank Pena, Brian Pierre, John Ramos, Damion Reeves, Dylan Ryan, Andre Spence, Wesley Skinner and Ricardo Valle** with BWSO; **Lindsay Degueldre** with BEDC; **Corinne Martin** with BPA; **Jasmine Perez** with Engineering Audits; **Sara A. Storrer** with BWS; and **Zi Wang** with OIT.

## Press Box



"City officials this week said a storm sewer project aimed at reducing flooding in northeastern Laurelton should be completed by summer 2016. The Department of Environmental Protection's two-year, \$18 million project will see 142 catch basins installed in neighborhood streets, leading to nearly four miles of new storm sewer lines. The lines will be installed along Hook Creek Boulevard between Essex Place and Merrick Boulevard; along Merrick between Hook Creek Boulevard and Brookville Road; and along Brookville Road from Elmont Road to 130th Avenue." To read the complete story [click here](#).

Woodhaven Manor, 96-01 Jamaica Avenue  
Wednesday, December 10  
6:00PM - 10:00PM

**The 2014 DEP Holiday Celebration is here!**

Tickets are \$35 per person and include a buffet dinner, gift card raffle, cash bar, and music by DJ Mary Mac. Guests allowed.

Pre-Dinner Social Hour	Buffet Dinner	Dessert
Mozzarella sticks	Pasta bean salad	Layer cake
Vegetable spring rolls	Tricolore shell salad	Cookies
Broccoli croquettes	Macaroni salad	Fruit salad
Stuffed mushrooms	Mixed green salad bar	Coffee
Chicken fingers	Roasted potatoes	Tea
Mixed Asian dumplings	Stir-fried vegetables	
Meatballs	Saffron and fried rice	
	Chicken Parmesan	
	Penne a la vodka	
	Pepper steak	

Tickets on sale all day today by the cafeteria at LeFrak. To purchase tickets by email, [click here](#).

**FIRST 15 TICKETS SOLD TODAY GET A FREE GIFT!**

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