

Friends and Family Night at Citi Field



Photo Credit: James McCray, Hy-Sync Media Corp.

“I think friends and family night instilled a lot of pride in DEP employees. It reminded all of us that we’re playing a role and that we have an impact on what the agency does. It helped us to remember what was important, that we’re assisting in the daily lives of the people of NYC.”

Peggy Henderson

Director of Asbestos Task Force, FMC

Spotlight on Safety

Summer Safety Tips 101

With the summer season upon us, outdoor workers face an increased risk of developing heat-related illnesses. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has launched a nationwide Heat Illness Prevention Campaign that aims to raise awareness and educate both employers and workers about the risks inherent in working in hot weather.

Workers exposed to hot and humid conditions, especially those doing heavy work tasks or using bulky protective clothing and equipment, are at risk of heat-related illnesses. The body normally cools itself by sweating, however, during hot and humid weather, this is not sufficient. The body’s temperature can rise to dangerous levels if precau-

tions are not taken. Heat illnesses can range from heat rash and heat cramps to heat exhaustion and even heat stroke, which requires immediate medical attention.

Workers can help protect themselves by taking the following simple steps:

- Wear light-colored clothing made from lightweight materials such as cotton or linen to allow sweat to evaporate.
- Drink 2-4 glasses of cool water each hour.
- Take a break and rest in a shaded area.
- Wear sunscreen if working outdoors for any period of time.

For more information on heat-related illnesses click [here](#).

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

DEP is one of the top water utilities in the nation because of the dedication of our nearly 6,000 men and women who work to protect public health and the environment every day by supplying clean drinking water, collecting and treating wastewater, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous materials pollution. We had an opportunity to recognize these contributions at last Friday's Mets game, when employees from nearly every part of the department got together at the first ever DEP Friends and Family Night. The event was a huge success and I thank DEP's Quality of Work Life (QWL) Oversight Committee and the Communication, Alternate Work Schedules (CAT) sub-committee for organizing the event.

More than 1,000 DEP employees, friends, and family members packed into Citi Field for the game. Everyone had a great time relaxing with colleagues and their families outside of work—and even the rain didn't dampen our spirits as most of the seats were under a balcony and we had one of the upper galleries to ourselves. Before the game the Mets honored DEP's two QWL committees with their Spirit Award during an on-field ceremony and I presented certificates of appreciation to **Rosaura DeJesus-Ramirez**, **Zoe Ann Campbell**, **Kimberly Vann**, and **James Cuggy** for helping organize the event. During the game we saw a great start by Mets ace Matt Harvey but the bullpen allowed the Nationals to come back for a 6-4 victory. We'll have more outings in the future and the next time I'm hoping we get to see the home team win.

DEP's Quality of Work Life Oversight Committee was formed in

the late 1970s to serve as a forum for DEP management and labor unions to work together to ensure that everyone's work environment is constantly improving and to make DEP a great place to work. Both labor and management have been working hard to reinvigorate DEP's labor and management committees to provide employees with everything from improved training, better communication, wellness activities, enhanced employee recognition opportunities, and special events that bring us together and make DEP a great place to work.

For example, the CAT subcommittee will host free Yoga classes at Lefrak every other Friday starting July 12th. This initiative began as an idea from an employee who approached the Committee with the proposal and serves as a reminder that the Committee is there to listen to your suggestions.

The Quality of Work Life Committee is also planning a comprehensive Health Fair for this fall to provide employees with information about staying healthy and promoting wellness.

Another important Quality of Work Life event to put in your calendar is Employee Recognition Day, which is scheduled for November 20th; so don't forget to save the date. Finally, a DEP Picnic is in the works for the spring of 2014. Please stay tuned for more details.

As always, if you have an idea to improve the employee experience we want to know about it. Feel free to email Deputy Commissioner **Zoe Ann Campbell**, or call her at (718) 595-3411 with your ideas.

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Focus on the Field



Sewer Maintenance Supervisor **Fred Schneider** started with DEP nearly 28 years ago as a Laborer in the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations' (BWSO) Pike Street Yard in Manhattan. He then transferred to Brooklyn South Sewer Maintenance in 1988 where he continues to work today.

Schneider explains that sewer maintenance goes beyond just flushing a sewer, and that his work involves making sure that people can live in their homes free from unsanitary conditions. One example of what this includes is the work done during a recent storm in early June. The area by Flatbush Avenue and the Belt Parkway was particularly impacted by heavy rain and Schneider was instrumental in handling the emergency response to hundreds of complaints related to the flooding conditions.

As he recalls, "There were several floods along the Belt Parkway and we also found overflow ponding conditions at many basins along the Parkway near Flatbush Avenue and by the Mill Basin Bridge. In coordinating several crews, I

had one crew continually pump the manhole at Mill Basin Bridge to ensure normal traffic flow because the flooding had blocked the left and center traffic lanes." Schneider welcomes the variety and level of challenges in sewer maintenance work. That day he also deployed crews in cleaning out numerous catch basins on the Parkway's entrance and exit ramps to prevent a massive traffic jam and ensure a manageable traffic flow. Schneider also recounts how the crews worked "to help reduce the potential for traffic accidents during a torrential rainfall."

Schneider, who passed the Supervisor exam in 1992, supervises nearly a dozen laborers and works closely with District Supervisor **Fred Young**. "Schneider is an essential part of the Brooklyn South team and his knowledge of drainage systems is remarkable," said BWSO Borough Manager **Tom Marrama**. "And, his concern for the public is unmatched. He has a rapport with community boards, and other City agencies, such as Transportation and Health, which helps get emergencies and other problems resolved quickly and efficiently."

A native New Yorker and a long-time Coney Island resident, Schneider is very active in his neighborhood. He is a member of Community Board 13 and he also volunteers with Friends of Kaiser Park where he leads clean-up activities with local youth. To relax, he attends Brooklyn Cyclones baseball games at MCU Park in Coney Island.

Cease the Grease!



DEP staff recently hosted NYCHA Commissioner **Margarita Lopez** and residents of the Baruch Houses at the Manhattan Pump Station as part of the ongoing "Cease the Grease" pilot project. Residents are participating in a yearlong program of intensive education and outreach on the wastewater process in their community with the goal of eliminating grease from sewer infrastructure and reducing the number of sewer backups.

North River Gets Good Neighbor Upgrade



The North River Wastewater Treatment Plant is located just a few hundred feet from the homes of tens of thousands of West Harlem residents and sits directly below the 28-acre Riverbank State Park, which attracts roughly 3 million visitors every year. To ensure that the plant can continue to treat up to 340 million gallons of wastewater each day while remaining a good neighbor, DEP recently announced the completion of a \$106 million upgrade to the plant's odor control and air monitoring systems. The work will help ensure that the air within the plant and odor associated with the wastewater treatment process is captured and treated before being released. In addition, the plant's air monitoring system, with stations in the plant, on Riverbank State Park, and in the West Harlem community, was upgraded with advanced technology that will allow for remote, real-time collection of data and will aid in the rapid detection of excess odor and necessary operational adjustments.

Summer Means NYC Water-On-the-Go!



DEP marked the beginning of the summer season by launching the fourth year of the Water-On-the-Go Program and distributing more than 1,000 reusable NYC Water bottles at City Hall Park in Manhattan. Since 2010, portable NYC Water drinking fountains have been placed at public plazas, busy pedestrian areas, and parks around the city during the summer months to educate New Yorkers and visitors about the high quality of NYC Water and to promote tap water as an alternative to bottled water or sugary beverages. This year, DEP has installed automated meter reading devices on all of the fountains, which will allow the department to track how much water is consumed as well as determine how many plastic bottles were conserved. Last year, more than 500,000 people visited Water-On-the-Go fountains, and this summer DEP aims to reach one million drinkers. To find the Water-On-the-Go fountain nearest to you download the improved [iPhone](#) and [Android](#) Apps.

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