

Sludge Tank Demo



Yesterday, work got underway to demolish a tank along the East River that was used to store sludge from the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant until it could be loaded onto boats and removed to one of DEP's dewatering facilities. DEP's

new fleet of sludge vessels are specially designed to enter Whale Creek and remove sludge directly from the plant. The removal of the sludge tank will make way for expanded park space and affordable housing. To see additional photos [click here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

Risk Management Plan/Process Safety Management

Industries using extremely hazardous substances, such as chlorine and ammonia, may unexpectedly release these chemicals during operation. OSHA's [Process Safety Management \(PSM\) of Highly Hazardous Chemicals Standard](#) and EPA's [Risk Management Plan Rule](#) are intended to reduce the potential for accidental releases by ensuring these regulated substances are properly managed in order to protect workers and the public. Some DEP facilities, including those that use chlorine gas to meet the safe drinking water disinfection regulations, are regulated by the PSM Standard/RMP Rule. To conform to these rules at regulated sites, DEP:

- conducts written hazard assessments detailing the potential effects of an accidental release
- evaluates worst-case and alternative accidental releases
- conducts inspections of the mechanical integrity of critical equipment
- informs the public and emergency response agencies (e.g. the fire department) of any hazards should an accidental release occur
- holds evacuation/rescue drills with emergency response personnel

For more information about PSM and RMP [click on the links above](#).

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.

Special Guest Commissioner's Corner

Jim Roberts, DEP's Deputy Commissioner of BWSO, is a guest commentator this week.

So far, this summer has been relatively mild. To date, New York City has not experienced the heat waves that have become common over the last few years. Let's hope the trend stays this way. Still, this week temperatures, and more importantly humidity, will be on the rise. When the temperature increases, the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) can see an increase in the number of fire hydrants that are illegally opened by New Yorkers trying to beat the heat. Illegally opened fire hydrants can release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute. Besides being wasteful, these hydrants can create excess demand on the water supply system and can cause reduced water pressure in neighborhoods, making it potentially difficult to fight fires. Additionally, because our wastewater treatment plants have to manage this additional flow, it consumes unnecessary energy, and increases our carbon footprint. More importantly, the force of the water can knock small children over, or push them into traffic.

Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap, which releases only 20 to 25 gallons per minute, ensuring adequate water pressure and reducing the risk that a child could be knocked over and injured by the force of the water. Residents can obtain spray caps for legal use of hydrants, which are provided to any adult 18 or over, free of charge at local firehouses.

DEP proactively monitors our system for illegally opened hydrants, and during the summer months we get help from the Hydrant Education Action Team (HEAT) program, a fire



hydrant abuse prevention campaign that deploys teams of teens hired through the Department of Youth and Community Development's Summer Youth Employment Program to inform New Yorkers about the dangers of illegally opening fire hydrants. After seven years of successful HEAT outreach campaigns, reports of illegally opened hydrants have fallen by more than 50 percent.

HEAT teams distribute educational literature, posters, and other informational materials about fire hydrant safety at community events, parades, greenmarkets, churches, and libraries. The outreach campaign focuses on neighborhoods in northern Manhattan and the Bronx that have historically seen high rates of unauthorized fire hydrant use during heat waves. In addition to literature, the teams distribute reusable water bottles, visors, and other items that promote the safe operation of fire hydrants.

Opening a hydrant illegally is dangerous and can result in fines of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both. If you see an illegally opened fire hydrant please report it to 311.

For more information about the HEAT Program [click here](#).



Focus on the Field



People may scoff at the notion, but a trip to a wastewater treatment plant really can change your life. Just ask **Ruth Douzinas**, the Director of the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction's (BEDC) Program Management Office.

Douzinas was raised in the town of Port Washington on Long Island and attended Friends Academy. While pursuing a degree in biology from Dartmouth College she had the opportunity to visit a wastewater treatment plant in New Hampshire and she was fascinated with not only the biological processes, but all the systems that work together to make the facility operate. She pursued this interest by moving to the west coast and earning a master's degree in environmental engineering from Stanford University. After graduation she joined a consulting firm in San Francisco where she worked on water and wastewater projects at military bases, including Fort Irwin in California and Fort Campbell in Kentucky. She also had the opportunity to work on DEP's Catskill/Delaware Ultraviolet Light Disinfection facility, which was completed on-time and on-budget. After 15 years in the private sector, Douzinas joined DEP as BEDC's Chief of Project Controls and was later promoted to her current title.

With nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next decade, DEP has one of the largest capital construction programs in the region and BEDC is simultaneously overseeing hundreds of projects. Douzinas and her colleagues in the Program Management Office are charged with providing each project's accountable manager with the support they need to complete their projects in a timely manner. A

critical aspect of this work involves a partnership with the Office of Information Technology to develop and institute a Project Management Information System (PMIS). PMIS will provide a comprehensive database of key information concerning every project in BEDC's portfolio, including schedule, daily inspection reports, correspondence and up-to-date budget information. Projects that are already utilizing PMIS include the rehabilitation of the Throgs Neck Pumping Station and New Croton Dam, and the sinking of the shafts for the Delaware Aqueduct Bypass Tunnel. And, as new projects go into construction they are also being added to the system.

"PMIS provides transparency and accountability for all of BEDC's projects," said Douzinas. It will also allow staff to spend less time managing the data on their projects and more time analyzing it. This will ultimately help us better serve DEP's operating bureaus by building our projects better and faster."

"Ruth brings invaluable experience to DEP and has been a terrific addition to the BEDC team," said acting Deputy Commissioner **Gerry Cox**. "Her work on PMIS will help us deliver a more cost-effective and efficient capital program that will ensure the vitality of our critical infrastructure."

Douzinas, her husband and two daughters, ages 6 and 7, now call the Upper East Side of Manhattan home. She enjoys ceramics and spending time outdoors hiking when she can. She also likes to visit project sites and, on a recent family trip to the Adirondacks, she took the opportunity to stop by the ongoing rehabilitation of the Gilboa Dam, which is ahead of schedule.

Palmer Hill Hiking Trail



A local videographer created this video at the opening of the new Palmer Hill Trail, which is located on DEP property in the Town of Andes, in Delaware County. DEP has teamed up with local nonprofit hiking groups and land stewards to open several hiking trails in the Catskills. Click the photo to view the video. For more information about recreational opportunities on City-owned land in the watersheds, [click here](#).

Sneak Peak



As start-up and testing continues at the Croton Water Filtration Plant under Van Cortland Park in the Bronx, the driving range that is being constructed on the roof of the plant is beginning to take shape. Here you see some of the greens and bunkers that will be part of the driving range.

Barreling Along in Belle Harbor



On Saturday, staff from DEP's Bureau of Public Affairs joined City Council Member **Eric Ulrich** to distribute rain barrels to approximately 120 homeowners in Belle Harbor, Queens. Rain barrels can help reduce flooding, ease pressure on the City's sewers, and help lower a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months.

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