

Sneak Peek Avenue V Pump Station



Construction is nearly complete on an extensive, \$200 million rehabilitation project at the century-old Avenue V Pumping Station in Gravesend, Brooklyn. When work is finished later this year, the Station will be able to pump 80 million gallons of wastewater a day to the Owl's Head Wastewater Treatment Plant during wet weather—more than two-and-a-half times its previous capacity. The upgrade will help reduce combined sewer overflows and improve water quality in Coney Island Creek. [Click here](#) to see more photos.

Spotlight on Safety

Electric Power Tools – Hazardous?

Electric power tools, including drills and saws, can be hazardous if used improperly. Workers must follow the proper safety precautions in order to avoid potential hazards, including the possibility of electrocution. Other hazards include burns and slight shocks, which can lead to secondary injuries, such as causing the user to fall from an elevated work location. When working with electric power tools keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Never carry the tool by the cord or hose.

- Wear appropriate apparel—loose clothing, ties, or jewelry can become caught in moving parts.
- Never use in damp or wet locations if not protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter.
- Disconnect tool when not in use, before servicing, and when changing accessories.
- Remove all portable electric tools that are damaged and tag “Do Not Use.”

Visit [OSHA](#) for more safety information on electric power and other tools.

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

As we enter the second straight week of frigid temperatures in New York City and in the Watershed, I would like to take a moment to thank all of the DEP employees who work outdoors, braving the cold, to ensure we continue to deliver critical services to the 9 million people who count on us each day.

Over the last several years, our Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) has reduced the number of annual water main breaks through improved maintenance of the valves that control pressure in the system. However, extremely cold temperatures can result in an increase in breaks. Since last Thursday, BWSO has responded to nearly a dozen reported street leaks and water main breaks. On Saturday night, for example, crews, including District Supervisor **Chris Devoy**, were notified about a heavy street leak on West 103 Street between West End Avenue and Riverside Drive in Manhattan around 11:30pm. Joined by emergency construction project managers and crews, they worked all night in sub-zero temperatures. By mid-morning workers completed repairs to a 50-year-old, 12-inch main and restored water to every customer on the block. On Sunday afternoon, I received a note from a resident who lives on the block praising our workers for their efforts, or as she put, it “making magic happen for everyone who lives on the block.”

BWSO is not the only operating bureau tackling the cold weather to keep our systems up and running. Late last week, **Paul Kiskorna**, who oversees the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment's (BWT) Collections Division for the northern half of the city, along with his crew, responded to an uptick in reports of grease blockages in regulators and interceptor sewers. In one case, crews in Lower Manhattan had to enter the sewer system



to secure a sling around a particularly large chunk of frozen grease. The obstruction they removed was nearly four feet around and could have caused serious problems if it had not been addressed.

In the Watershed, workers have been busy clearing City-owned roads and patching potholes to protect public safety. Just this morning, Watershed Maintainer **Bill Smith** set out with a crew to remove ice buildup on City Road #4 and to apply cold patch to any potholes. When they started out this morning, it was only five degrees outside.

These are just a few examples of the hundreds of DEP employees who work around the clock, in all types of weather to deliver on our promise to protect public health and the environment by supplying clean drinking water, collecting and treating wastewater, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous materials pollution. It looks like we are in for at least a few more days of frigid temperatures and our number one priority is keeping everyone at DEP, especially those who work outdoors, safe. For more information on ways to stay safe in these cold temperatures [click here](#).

Focus on the Field



For Supervisor of Water and Sewer Repairs **Elvin Millan**, success on the job depends heavily on teamwork, communication, and dedication. Millan and a team of six Construction Laborers work collaboratively during often stressful conditions in the field, such as water main breaks, and he credits the contributions of the entire crew in helping to get the job done. "Each day presents a unique challenge," said Millan. "But having a team of talented professionals helps to ensure that we continue to provide the public with critical services, and that we do so in a safe manner."

In addition to repair and maintenance work, Millan was recently involved in the building of the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operation's (BWSO) Training Center. The facility recreates the infrastructure of an actual New York City street, including sewers, catch basins, hydrants, hoods, hangers, and valves. Apprentices begin their careers at the center where they receive operational and safety training on equipment used by BWSO crews in the field.

"Elvin has been involved in the repair of more than 1,000 water main breaks during his career and he is always willing to share this

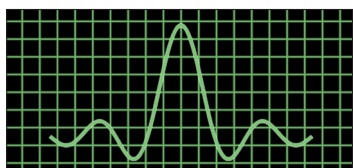
invaluable experience with his colleagues," said District Supervisor **Jose Ramirez-Charles**. "He was also instrumental in the construction of the BWSO Training Center, which plays an important role for newly-hired apprentice laborers and also provides a source of continuing education for veteran employees. Elvin is a true asset to the department."

Millan takes great pride in the role he and his crew played in building the training center and providing the opportunity for employees to simulate the maintenance and repair tasks performed by crews in the field. Trainees learn how to operate a gate valve, perform a shutdown of a water main, repair and replace fire hydrants, set up a safe work zone, and operate truck hoists, compressors, jackhammers, and pipe saws.

In his 32 years at DEP, Millan has held a variety of positions. In 1982 he started as a part-time employee in the Payroll Department, then moved up to Office Aide, and four months later became an Office Associate. In late 1984, Millan became a Construction Laborer and seven years later was promoted to his current position.

Millan was born in New York and raised in Puerto Rico until the age of 12, when he returned to the city. He graduated from John Adams High School, which is located just a few miles from the Queens Repair Yard where he works out of now. Outside of work he enjoys spending quality time with his family, traveling, and playing the outfield for an adult baseball team. **Felix Millan**, a distant cousin of his, played second base for the Mets and he is hoping the home town team returns to the postseason in 2014.

Make Your Voice Heard!



and access code for the "DEP Employee Pulse Check Survey." Paper surveys will be distributed to employees who don't have easy access to computers. They can also be obtained on the 18th floor at Lefrak. The anonymous survey will be open until February 7, 2014. Please take advantage of the opportunity to make your opinion known!

Obtaining the input and perspective of DEP employees on efforts to improve the department is a priority and, to that end, yesterday you received an email from Deputy Commissioner **Diana Jones Ritter** that contains a link

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

Extra, Extra!



Please take a moment to view the latest edition of [DEP News](#). If you have any story ideas for future news segments please email them [here](#).

For those of you wishing to view the video outside of the office, you can watch it [here](#) on our YouTube Channel.

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 18 new employees attended the orientation and received an overview of the department from DEP's Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts** and Director of Training and Program Development **Doreen Johann**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Puneet Auluck, **Timothy Dougherty**, **Volodymyr Nedoliz**, **York Sheriffe** and **Thomas F. Toomey III** with BWT; **Marquise Evans** and **Kristin Maidt** with BEDC; **Vincent Cittadino** with BWSO; **Michelle Greco** with BWS; **Mikal Archer**, **Veronica Arroyo**, **Nancy Austin**, **Cheryse Martin**, and **Sabrina Perryman** with BCS; **Alaric V. De Liberto** with the Executive Office; **Sylvia Daniel Autry** with ACCO; **Kendelle Robertson** with BPMC; and **Nadine McGregor** with BEPA.

Kudos Corner

District Supervisor **Chris Devoy** was among the first on scene at Saturday night's 12-inch water main break on 103 St in Manhattan. Around midnight, BWSO's emergency construction project managers were called in to oversee the repair. By mid-morning on Sunday, Project Manager **Vincent Stando** informed residents on the block that water had been restored, less than 12 hours after the break. On Sunday afternoon, a thankful 103rd Street resident wrote to **Commissioner Strickland**. Below is an excerpt from her letter:

"I wanted to make an extreme effort to let you know how grateful I am for your team who showed up immediately and went to work jack-hammering and doing what they do all night long in the sub-zero weather. All is well again and water is back on. You can only imagine our relief. I've lived in NYC for years now and have experienced how complicated and frustrating it can often be. This is why I'm taking the time to let you know that Vinny (Stando) and his crew are outstanding and made magic happen for us all on this street."