

**From:** [Strickland Jr., Carter H.](#)  
**Subject:** Weekly Pipeline - Extra Edition - Employees of the Month for February  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 28, 2012 6:20:57 PM  
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Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor  
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

# WEEKLY PIPELINE EXTRA

March 28, 2012

Volume III • Issue 117A



## DEP Employees of the Month for February 2012

The Employee of the Month program recognizes DEP staff members that have exhibited outstanding personal effort, and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the people of New York City.

DEP is a great agency that delivers services that millions of New Yorkers depend on daily. Making good on that daily promise requires the dedication and hard work of the nearly 6,000 employees of DEP. To nominate someone who has demonstrated uncommon dedication and excellence, fill out the nomination form with some basic information, such as the nominee's responsibilities, examples of extraordinary performance, and ways that they have set an example for others. The form is available on Pipeline, and you'll need to submit it by the tenth day of each month. For more information, email Herb Roth at [hroth@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:hroth@dep.nyc.gov).

The Employees of the Month for February, featured in this Weekly Pipeline Extra edition, were honored at a breakfast on March 28 with Commissioner Strickland, received a certificate, and had their names added to the Employee of the Month Board on the 3rd and 19th floors at Lefrak, and at the Kingston Office. These men and women set a standard for all of us to emulate and appreciate.



### Environmental Compliance - Philip Licitra

Philip began his career at DEP in February 1997 and currently serves as an Air Pollution Inspector responsible for supervising the Nighttime Enforcement Group. Philip oversees a team of field inspectors whose work covers nighttime and weekend complaints concerning the Air and Noise codes. These inspections require a personal appointment with a resident who has filed a complainant and Philip is often called upon to use his outstanding communication and coordination skills, as well as patience to navigate the differing opinions in any given dispute. He has also been instrumental in using his skills when assigned to large outdoor events such as concerts, and most recently supervised enforcement efforts during Fashion Week.



### Water Supply - Nicholas Prokopowicz

Nicholas began his career with DEP in December 2008 and serves as a Laboratory Microbiologist supervising the Aqueduct Monitoring Group at the Kensico Laboratory. Since starting with DEP, Nicholas worked diligently to become one of the primary experts in the bureau's microbiology group. His talents and skills, together with a strong positive attitude, allow him to be a strong leader. He is always willing to assist and to help ensure the job is done correctly. This was evidenced recently as Nicholas was instrumental in collecting and compiling data at the Delaware 18 sample site this past fall. His sample collection analysis confirmed that a chlorine leak in the downtake shaft had been successfully repaired. He also collected compliance data at an additional site, providing proof that a contractor's work was not completed. His attention to detail, organizational skills, and desire to succeed truly sets the example for other employees to follow.



### Water and Sewer Operations - **Winston Ebanks**

Winston began his career with DEP in September 1991 and has previously worked in the bureaus of Engineering, Design and Construction and Wastewater Treatment before joining Water and Sewer Operations in 2007. He currently serves as an Associate Project Manager in the bureau's Shaft Operations Division of Distribution Operations. Winston takes tremendous pride in his work, making certain that contract specifications are meticulously adhered to by contractors working on projects assigned to him. He keeps his supervisors well-informed of progress, making certain nothing has been overlooked.

Winston's dedication was evidenced by his actions the weekend of Hurricane Irene. He had not been scheduled to work, but was called upon twice and responded without hesitation. Specifically, on Friday night, 8/26/11, he was called to provide relief to another employee at a shaft in the Bronx where an emergency situation was being addressed. At the last moment, he was advised that his services weren't needed so he headed back home. Then he was called again to see if he could work the following morning, Saturday 8/27/11, and again he responded without delay. He worked during the height of the hurricane on Saturday, driving to several different shaft sites throughout the city to ensure all precautionary measures were taken.



### Wastewater Treatment - **William Sedutto**

William began his career with DEP in March 2004 and serves as a process control engineer at the 26th Ward Wastewater Treatment Plant. In January of 2012, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) imposed stringent new regulatory standards that required the 26th Ward plant to significantly reduce its discharges of nitrogen into Jamaica Bay. DEP has been upgrading the plant to do Biological Nitrogen Removal, but this process is not very effective during the winter months, because microbes are less active. DEP wrote to DEC, asking that the new limits not be imposed during the winter, but the request was denied. Fortunately, due to William's tremendous effort and dedication, he was able to optimize aeration, centrate treatment, and the new glycerol-feed system to achieve the new limits throughout January and February. This was quite an accomplishment.



### OpX Award - **Sharon Trotti**

Sharon began her career with DEP in December 1995 and serves as Chief of Purchasing in the Bureau of Water Supply. Sharon has played a critical role in the OpX team's assessment of two large chemical contracts -chlorine gas and hydrofluosilicic acid (HFS). Her contributions led to the renegotiation of the price with the current vendors that has yielded an 8% savings on the cost of chlorine gas effective March 1, 2012, and effective May 1, 2012 will yield a 13% savings on the cost of HFS. In terms of dollars, Sharon's contribution of critical information and data allowed BWS, in conjunction with DCAS and the ACCO, to save DEP approximately \$750,000 per year.

Additionally, Sharon suggested to the OpX team another potential source of savings that is currently under review. She prepared a detailed analysis of the payment process at BWS, highlighting areas for improvement that might speed up vendor payments where savings would be achieved from early payment discounts.



### Customer Services - Meter Testing Facility Group

The Meter Testing Facility (MTF) is the storehouse for meters, meter calibration and accuracy testing. This unit is responsible for all plumbing work performed by the Bureau of Customer Services (BCS) for meter related work. The staff at the facility deal with all work involving confined space preparation and oversight. They are responsible for supplying water meters and meter related equipment to all borough offices; overseeing and coordinating the 24/7 Hansen emergency meter replacement and repair. MTF is responsible for the maintenance of meter and equipment inventory, organization and return of warranty claim meters and equipment to manufacturers; and planning and overseeing quality control of inspection staff to insure that a sufficient number of large meter field accuracy tests are performed to comply with DEP's obligations under consent decrees.

In 1989, DEP located its Meter Testing Facility in a building on the Brooklyn waterfront, directly under the Manhattan Bridge, in a gritty industrial area. Over the next 22 years, that neighborhood acquired a new name, DUMBO; was developed into one of the city's most expensive residential neighborhoods; and last year saw the waterfront transformed by the opening of Brooklyn Bridge Park. The northern edge of the park is adjacent to the MTF and last year DEP agreed to move the meter testing function and make the building available for the park's use by January 31, 2012. The group worked tirelessly with DEP's Facilities Management and Construction group to identify another DEP facility in Brooklyn to house meter testing and remove and recalibrate expensive meter testing equipment while ensuring that meter testing continued to perform its critical functions. DEP was able to make the facility available to the park by New Year's Day, one month earlier than planned, due in large part to the BCS Meter Testing group's professionalism, commitment and hard work. The members of the MTF group are: **Michael Roach, David Ventura, Felix Gonzalez, Damion Linton, Dawand Hairston, Alex Dionne, Robert Morrison, Billy Martin, Robert Graziano, Larry Walker and Christine Sam.**

## **Commissioner's Award:**



During routine maintenance and valve exercising in the summer of 2010, the Shaft 4 Maintenance Group found that a 48" riser valve at Shaft 4 on City Water Tunnel No. 1 in the Bronx was not functioning properly. This valve was manufactured in 1914 and is used to control the flow of water from the tunnel to distribution. When working properly, the valve should move freely over a 17" distance to the open or closed position. The valve became stuck at a position that left it approximately 5.5" open. The situation was assessed and work was done on various components relative to the valve in order to make sure these parts were in good working order. Not all parts of a riser valve are accessible, so the parts that can be addressed are critical. Once this was completed, a date was scheduled to attempt to pump the riser valve to its full open position.

Along with Deputy Commissioner **James Roberts**, Director of Distribution Operations **Michael Farnan** and Chief of Shaft Maintenance **Michael Sullivan**, the Shaft 4 Maintenance Group, assembled at Shaft 4 on February 27, 2012 for the operation. The crews set up telemetry equipment to monitor the pressure in the riser valve "dashpot" and the movement of the valve. Monitoring the pressure is critical because exerting too much pressure could cause a catastrophic failure of the valve. A hand pump was utilized to increase the pressure in the riser valve "dashpot" in order to create movement. The pressure was carefully increased and closely monitored. Typically, a pressure differential of 15 to 20 psi (pounds per square inch) is required to create the movement in a riser valve, but this one needed an approximate differential pressure of 30 psi for the movement to occur. The movement was not smooth and required close attention since a slow, methodical approach was taken to the operation. The maximum pressure differential achieved during the course of the operation was 45 psi, something that is usually avoided during normal riser valve exercises.

The personnel were keenly aware of the critical nature of the work and they were tasked with manning the hand pump, watching the electronic readings, watching the analog gauges, operating the hydraulic feed and drain lines, watching the indicator movement and keeping precise notes on the entire operation. The job took approximately six hours and in the end the riser valve was moved to its full open position.

The Shaft 4 Maintenance Group includes **Thakoord Rambrich, Jaime Berkeley, Nicholas Paci, Dennis McDermott, Jr., Louis Grosso, Alvin Wells, Vincent Hibbert, Michael Wong, Nicholas Dechenaux, Junel Tangonan** and **Rajpaul Satdeo**.