NYC Environmental Protection
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Cas Holloway, Commissioner

WEEKLY PIPELINE

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BWSO: A Bureau For All Seasons

Ernie Cavagnaro, Dennis Delaney, Chiefs of Maintenance and Repairs, along with **Tasos Georgelis, Acting Director of Field Operations**, are clear about one thing—their work for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO), led by Deputy Commissioner **Jim Roberts**, has few typical days.

No matter the season, it's a 24-hour operation. The cold months of winter lead to an increase in water main breaks, although breaks can and do occur throughout the year. Spring and summer bring above-average flooding complaints, and the summer is the peak season for hydrant alerts. Falling leaves can clog catch basins during the autumn months.

Water main breaks can be a particular challenge given their unpredictability. "You don't select the time of a water main break, it picks it for you, and it frequently happens during off hours—at night, weekends, or a holiday," says Tasos. And since an average water main is 12 inches in diameter but can range from 6 to 84 inches, the water flowing on the street can be minor or quite dramatic as shown in the photo above.

Emergency calls and routine work are handled 24/7 by 90 crews working out of 20 yards located throughout the five boroughs. The sewer maintenance yards handle sewer backups, clogged catch basins, and flood complaints. Water maintenance yards respond to water leaks, distribution problems and fire hydrants that may be open, leaking, or inoperable. They also respond to major fires to assure that water is available for FDNY and

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Spotlight on Safety

Electrical Safety

Most employees take electricity for granted and rarely think about the hazards. Hundreds of deaths occur every year as a direct result of electrical accidents at work. What is even more tragic is that most of these fatalities could be easily avoided.

Employees should be aware that:

- Normal workplace or household current can be lethal.
- Electrocutions may result from contact with an object as seemingly innocuous as a broken light bulb.
- Overloaded electrical circuits can start fires.
- Electricity will always try to travel to ground, even if it means going through a person.
- Failure to inspect electrical equipment before use can lead to shocks, burns, or even death.

For additional information, please refer to DEP's policy on Control of Hazardous Energies — Lock-Out / Tag-Out (LOTO).

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 EH&S liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EH&S 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

This past Saturday I took a trip to the Watershed, where Deputy Commissioner **Paul Rush** and members of his team led a tour of some impressive facilities. The day started with a visit to the BWS water supply control center in Grahamsville, where Director of Operations **Tina Johnstone** briefed me on an incoming winter storm and the preparations we make upstate to protect water quality during runoffs and snowmelts. Acting Chief of Wastewater Operations **Jose Atkinson** led a tour of the Grahamsville Wastewater Treatment plant, and Chief of Western Operations **John Vickers** led tours of two hydroelectric plants, the Neversink and West Delaware Tunnel Outlets (NTO and WDTO). The NTO is a 25 Mega-Watt generating facility owned by DEP and operated under contract by the New York Power Authority. WDTO is under a 50-year lease to Brookfield Power, Inc. and is an 8 Mega-Watt generating facility at the base of the tunnel that connects Cannonsville reservoir to Rondout reservoir.

Above is a picture of the Ashokan Waste Channel in operation—on Saturday we were releasing approximately 250 MGD into the Little Beaverkill Creek, part of a program we started on January 6 to improve water quality in the reservoir, which saw an increase in turbidity levels after a large December storm. The releases also enhance the flood protection the reservoir already provides downstream. We also saw the Olive Bridge Dam, and stood on the dividing weir of the Ashokan reservoir, one of the most beautiful spots in the entire watershed. The tour concluded with an inspection of the Dividing Weir Gatehouse, which is scheduled for rehabilitation, and the Upper Gate Chamber where **Mike Kight**, Shokan Regional Manager, pointed out the in-house repair completed this past summer of one of the eight 60-inch gate valves that had been previously stuck and inoperable. This repair saved significant capital resources and demonstrates the tremendous talent of DEP's world-class employees.

Last Wednesday, **Mayor Bloomberg** delivered his ninth State of the City Address, and committed that this term would meet and exceed the achievements of the last eight years. The Mayor focused on creating economic opportunity for New Yorkers, including making it as easy as possible to plan and start businesses in the five boroughs. DEP can play a key role in this effort, by working with other City agencies to make sure that new businesses get hooked into water and sewer, and get open. Just this past Saturday, thanks in part to the efforts of DC **Jim Roberts** and the BWSO team, 400 employees were able to get to work at a new BJs in Queens. In the coming weeks, we'll work with our sister agencies, Deputy Mayor **Edward Skyler**, and Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations **Jeff Kay** to cut through bureaucracy and improve customer service. We'll also look at ways to consolidate agency operations, and get more out of every dollar we spend on behalf of New Yorkers.

I encourage you to watch or read the Mayor's speech, and let me know if you have any ideas to improve the agency or enhance customer service.

Focus on the Field

Magdi Farag, P.E., Director of Engineering, Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, is in his fourth decade of service at DEP. He joined the Agency in 1970—since 1995 he's managed three Divisions: Capital Planning and Development; Review and Construction Compliance; and Permits and Inspections. Magdi currently reports to DC **Jim Roberts** in BWSO, and he's as busy as ever today.

Magdi holds multiple degrees – a B.S. in Civil Engineering Structures, two M.S. in Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering – and is a Life Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers (FASCE). In a DEP career full of milestones, some highlights include the establishment of sewer standards for the Agency and oversight of the promulgation of "Rules Governing the Design and Construction of Private Sewers or Private Drains" in New York City.

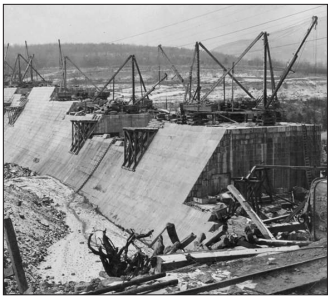
In ways large and small, Magdi is the author of the infrastructure that supports eight million New Yorkers.

As for current projects, Magdi discussed the Arverne-by-the-Sea East Private Development, part of the continuing effort to revitalize Far Rockaway. Review of the developer's Private Drainage and Sewer Construction plans, as well as all design work has been completed and construction will soon commence.

Another project is the Staten Island siphon, a new 72" water siphon, inside a 12' tunnel, that will replace the existing siphons that provide back-up water supply to Staten Island from Brooklyn. Design is complete and the project, which required numerous permits, engineering studies, marine borings, a new chlorination station, trunk water mains and sewers will be bid out soon.

When asked what he enjoys most about his work Magdi replied, "Coming up with creative solutions that unusual engineering projects demand." And, what he enjoys outside work, he smiled and said, "Traveling and listening to classical music, while walking my dog."

DEP: Then & Now



Then: Olive Bridge Dam during construction. The massive dam required a 30-foot trench filled with solid concrete and masonry in order to resist the constant pressure of 132 billion gallons of water attempting to push the dam into the valley. 12/8/1910

Now: Completed in 1917, the Olive Bridge Dam impounds the Esopus Stream, and along with seven dikes (totaling 7 miles), creates the beautiful Ashokan Reservoir.

Ask Cas

askcas@dep.nyc.gov

Q. I would like to suggest that DEP take the lead by buying hybrid vehicles in the future, whether it is a car, small SUVs or large pick-ups. This would save money on gasoline, and DEP would be proud to display and advertise that we are making strides in the "Go Green campaign." Submitted by: Vijay Rao, Administrative Project Manager, BWSO

A. Vijay, that is a great idea and, in fact, DEP has been at the forefront in replacing its vehicles with energy efficient, low emission hybrid vehicles. All but 4 of the DEP fleet of sedans are either Toyota or Honda hybrids; as well, the majority of Agency SUVs are hybrid Ford Escapes - and we even have several Chevy Silverado hybrid pickup trucks.

NAME THE 4 BREAKOUT ROOMS!

The 19th Floor has a new look – now the breakout rooms need names

SUBMIT THE WINNING NAMES AND WIN A TOUR OF A DEP FACILITY!

February 1 is the deadline - submit entries to newsletter@dep.nyc.gov

The winner will be announced in the February 9 issue of Weekly Pipeline!

(BWSO - continued)

work with other city agencies in many emergency scenarios. Repair yards cover both sides of the system, dealing with water mains, hydrants, and sewers. They do the hard work of digging and repairing our underground infrastructure in a maze of underground pipes, regardless of the weather or time of day. These crews work over three shifts: mornings, afternoons and midnights including holidays and weekends.

With over 14,000 miles of water and sewer mains, approximately 141,000 catch basins, and over 109,000 fire hydrants in New York City, Ernie, Dennis and Tasos, along with the women and men of Field Operations, are on DEP's front lines every day.

Milestones

Congratulations to the following DEP employees on 25 Years of Service: **Maria Duran-Waller**, BWT, **John Ebanks**, BWT, **Asher Hada**, BWS, **Davendra Persaud**, BWT, **Brendan Quigley**, BWSO, **Angel Rivera**, BWSO, **Dennis Smith**, BWT

Haitian Relief Effort

Mayor Bloomberg and City **Council Speaker Quinn** recently announced that City employees would be able to contribute to the Haitian Relief Fund via payroll deduction. (Click here for a link to further detailed instructions). You can also send a check to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, or donate directly on line by visiting their website at www.nyc.gov/fund.

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