

Kensico Dam Maintenance



Over time, weeds and plants have taken root in the joints between the stones on the face of the 307-foot-high Kensico Dam in Westchester County. Last week, specialized crews rappelled down the face of the dam to remove the fibrous plants and, later this summer, DEP will re-grout the spaces between the stones to ensure they are sealed and secure.



Spotlight on Safety

Employee Wellness

We all know that employee health affects our attitude, productivity, stress levels, and healthcare costs so in recognition of National Safety Month we are focusing on “Employee Wellness” this week.

Take a proactive step and encourage each other to make healthy choices—quit smoking or begin a physical activity program and take a walk around the

block during your lunch break. Do your part to Be Active, Be Healthy, and Be Productive.

Get recommendations on nutrition, stress management, weight management and more from:

- [NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene](#)
- [American Heart Association](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control](#)

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

This afternoon, **Mayor Bloomberg** presented “*A Stronger, More Resilient New York*,” the City’s Long-Term Plan to Further Prepare for the Impacts of a Changing Climate, a comprehensive and ambitious report that analyzes the city’s climate risks and outlines more than 250 recommendations to protect neighborhoods and infrastructure from future climate events.

In this edition of Commissioner’s Corner, I would like to focus on a section of the report that is critical to the continued prosperity of New York City—protecting the source of our drinking water. The New York City water supply provides more than a billion gallons of water every day to almost half of the population of the State of New York—plus the tens of millions of tourists and commuters who visit the city each year.

The system begins at our reservoirs, as far as 125 miles away from the city. From there, the water travels to end users through a network of more than 7,000 miles of aqueducts and water mains which are buried and pressurized, protecting them from infiltration. Redundancies built into the system ensure a constant flow of high quality water—even during events like Hurricane Sandy.

Despite the system’s flexibility, more frequent heavy rain events associated with climate change could pose a significant risk to the city’s water supply. Increased runoff causes higher contaminant levels and increased turbidity due to the underlying geology of land near the reservoirs. These conditions are particularly challenging if heavy rain events happen one right after another.

The events of the summer of 2011 illustrate this vulnerability. In late August, Tropical Storm Irene dropped more than 16 inches of rain in parts of the Catskill system. Just 10 days later, Tropical Storm Lee hit the same area effecting water quality conditions at several reservoirs. During Sandy, wind gusts created waves at Kensico Reservoir which caused erosion and resulted in a turbidity spike. In each case, DEP responded with operational measures that allowed us to continue to supply clean drinking water. However, with more frequent heavy rain events expected in the future, we need to act now.

Among the many recommendations in the Mayor’s report is maintaining DEP’s

commitment to our Watershed Protection Programs. The City has invested more than \$1.5 billion in such programs, which historically included strategically purchasing land and conservation easements near our reservoirs to prevent activities that could threaten water quality. Currently, more than 37 percent of watershed lands are protected. We have also made great improvements in operations through the introduction of our Operational Support Tool. Moving forward we will continue to protect land around crucial points like Kensico Reservoir and look for innovative new approaches to protecting our water supply such as stream management programs and improved forecasting.

Just this week, we reached an agreement with The Whippoorwill Club in Westchester County to place a permanent conservation easement on more than 100 acres of the Club’s property that drains into the Kensico Reservoir watershed. The easement precludes future development and allows the Club to continue golf operations, under specific limitations. The agreement will help protect Kensico Reservoir, which is crucial because it is the one of the final stops for much of the city’s drinking water. With the addition of the easement, 43 percent of the land around the Reservoir will be protected.

DEP has received national recognition for its innovative thinking, long term planning, and robust financial commitment to protecting our water supply. In March, the American Water Works Association awarded the department its 2013 “*Exemplary Source Water Protection Award*” that recognizes DEP for setting ambitious goals and implementing programs that are effective and innovative. Earlier today, Deputy Commissioner **Paul Rush** accepted the award at a conference in Denver Colorado.

As we face a changing climate, DEP will remain committed to protecting our water supply and to making the necessary investments to ensure that all of our water supply and wastewater systems are more resilient. I would like to thank **Alan Cohn**, from the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis, who was on loan to the Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency team, and the dozens of DEP employees who have worked tirelessly to assist in the preparation of today’s report. We can all be proud that the work we are doing will ensure a bright future for New York City.

Focus on the Field



Queens native **Joe Olewnicki** began his career at DEP as a college intern in the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment's (BWT) Stormwater Section nearly 22 years ago. After earning a bachelors degree in engineering from Cooper Union and a bachelors of science from New York University, Olewnicki received a masters degree in engineering from the State University of New York. Over the years, he worked in BWT's Project Development Section where he coordinated inter-bureau projects, before being promoted to Project Development Section Chief, Division Chief of Facility Planning, and most recently, Chief of BWT's Division of Engineering. Throughout Olewnicki's time at DEP, sewage treatment has gotten more and more intricate and includes complicated systems including power generation, electrical engineering, and civil engineering.

"We are focused on providing the wastewater treatment plants, pump stations, and CSO facilities with well-engineered solutions to keep them in a state of good repair and better manage the work load on the plant staff," said Olewnicki. "The system has become much more complex over the past decade with the activation of three new Combined Sewer Overflow facilities, the completion of six nitrogen reduction projects, and the massive upgrade to the Newtown Creek plant. Through these projects, thousands of new individual systems were added to BWT."

One of Olewnicki's responsibilities has been to oversee the Project

Labor Agreements (PLA) on DEP's Job Order Contracts. PLAs ensure that qualified workers are hired at collectively bargained wages and benefits while agreeing to certain terms of employment. Olewnicki ensures that the contractor and all sub-contractors are abiding by the terms of the PLAs. "DEP's projects help protect public health and the environmental wellbeing of the city," said Olewnicki. "PLAs provide a level of certainty to the workers, the contractors, and to DEP that helps ensure that these critical projects remain on schedule."

"One of Joe's greatest strengths is his ability to deliver projects quickly, which is vital for maintaining BWT's core services," notes **Mike Quinn**, BWT's Director of Engineering and Budget. "Our successful completion of over 400 Job Order Contracts last year was due in large part to Joe's diligence and innovation, which permeates the entire BWT engineering division. As DEP's capital program migrates from the mega-upgrades of the recent past to smaller targeted jobs using our new Asset Management System, Joe's efficient in-house design and construction management teams have become indispensable."

Outside of his work at DEP, Olewnicki enjoys being with his family and dedicates much of the time to his two young children, including chauffeuring them to sporting events and martial arts and dancing classes. As he puts it "(I) am well on my way to earning my second grammar school diploma."

DEP Summer Blood Drive

Four million Americans each year benefit from life-saving blood transfusions. In fact, one of every three people will need a life-saving transfusion sometime during their lifetime. Please help by donating at the below locations and times:

Kingston/Catskill Area: 51 Albany Avenue, 6/11, 12:00 pm to 7:00 pm; **Lefrak:** 3rd Floor Cafeteria, 6/12 - 6/13, 7:45 am to 1:30 pm; **Downsville Region Area:** Downsville Fire Hall, 6/12, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm; **Kensico/Highland Regions-Sutton Park Area:** Sutton Park - 2nd Floor, 6/20, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.

Sustainability: New York City Style



The corner of 4th Avenue and Dean Street in Brooklyn is becoming a showcase for PlaNYC. In 2011, DEP installed four of the city's first bioswales as part of the Green Infrastructure Plan to better manage stormwater and improve the health of local waterways and, just recently, the Department of Transportation introduced the city's first bike share program and placed a station at the same corner. These are just two examples of how PlaNYC initiatives are transforming New York into a greener and greater city.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 17 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Commissioner **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Devon Cameron, Nelson Correa, Alice R. Jung, MD A. Kabir, Yuri Lokchine, Roddy Milord, Frederick Okeke, AM Z. Reza, Rafael Rivera, Marlon Wazid, and Srinivasan Shanmugarajan with BWT; **Christopher Austin and Edward Sprague** with BWS; **Radcliffe A. Hilton and Ramchand Ramkishun** with BWSO; **Jason Friedman** with BEDC; and **Max Litt** with BEPA.

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