



**Environmental
Protection**

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY

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Recreationally Speaking...



Winter will soon transform New York City's land in the upstate watershed, ushering in a new set of recreational opportunities. Trails for hiking and waters for boating will become frosty havens for hunting, snowshoeing, cross-county skiing, ice fishing, eagle watching and more.

In total, New York City owns more than 108,000 acres in the watershed that are open for these activities, and many of those areas do not require

a DEP access permit. In 2012 alone, DEP opened 5,207 acres of new recreation land, and converted 1,521 acres from "entry by permit" to public access areas that do not require a permit.

Hunting is among the most popular winter activities. In fact, many upstate DEP employees take time off during the end of November and beginning of December to mark the opening week of deer hunting season. Many upstate school districts

Spotlight on Safety

Hand Protection

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, injuries to the hand, wrist, and finger account for 23 percent of workplace injuries, the second highest percentage, with approximately 110,000 hand injuries resulting in lost time from work annually. For those workers whose jobs expose them to extreme heat, cold, lacerations, chemicals, or pathogens, the use of protective gloves is extremely important.

Hand protection is not a simple matter; general purpose gloves are not sufficient for all types of materials or chemicals handled. Special gloves are required for maximum protection depending on the material to be handled. Because every glove material

has its limitations, workers must be aware of signs of permeation (substances passing through the intact material), penetration (substances passing through a seam or damaged part of the glove), degradation, or contamination.

Despite the risks, many workers take a casual attitude toward wearing protective gloves. Workers must be made aware of what gloves to wear, what their responsibility is in caring for these gloves, and where to request replacement gloves.

Reduce the risk of hand injury. If a job requires it—wear the approved and appropriate PPE. If you have questions about what type of hand protection is required or recommended for your tasks, consult with your EHS representative or contact OEHS at ehs@dep.nyc.gov.

Commissioner's Corner

Last week **Mayor Bloomberg** spoke about New York's City's future after Hurricane Sandy and provided a rousing call to action to deal with climate change and extreme weather patterns. The speech will help guide our thinking and planning here at DEP and I'd like to use this space to share some of the Mayor's thoughts with all of you. The full speech as delivered is here [G](#).

New York is a harbor city with 520 miles of coastline and we know that sea levels are expected to rise by another two and a half feet over the next 40 years. Accordingly, we must take steps now to prepare for intense storms in the future. While we cannot solve the problems associated with climate change on our own here in New York City, we can and have been a leader in this effort compared to other cities in America and worldwide.

Since PlaNYC was launched five years ago, we've reduced the City's carbon footprint by 16 percent, and we're well on our way towards meeting our goal of a 30 percent reduction by 2030. The City has also taken a number of important steps to prepare for rising sea levels and the possibility of increasingly intense storms. We instituted a \$2.4 billion green infrastructure plan that uses natural methods of capturing rainwater before it can flood our communities and overwhelm our sewage system. We've also adopted new zoning regulations that eliminate penalties for elevating boilers, generators and other electrical equipment above the ground. Further, we're in the process of restoring 127 acres of wetlands, which is perhaps the best natural barrier against storms that we have. And we've expanded the Staten Island Blue Belt, which is also a natural drainage system, by some 325 acres.

We cannot predict with precision what kind of intense storm event may hit the region in the future, and we need to make sure that we have people who are well-trained, well-equipped, and are able to react in an emergency and deal with whatever nature throws at us. Deputy Mayors **Cas Holloway** and **Linda Gibbs** will conduct a comprehen-

sive after-action review of our preparedness measures and recovery operations. They'll focus on how we can improve the way we mobilize and deploy resources and essential services before, during, and after a major disaster. They'll consult widely with outside experts and with local community stakeholders affected by the storm and in February will present the Mayor with a full report and recommendations. This will include, in part, new maps of evacuation zones that reflect the actual surge experienced in Hurricane Sandy, which extended beyond Zone A.

The City will support rebuilding by using updated FEMA flood plans in combination with new building and zoning requirements to elevate buildings and to make homes and businesses more resilient. In addition, **Seth Pinsky**, President of the NYC Economic Development Corporation, will develop concrete recovery plans for affected communities and, with the input of DEP and other city agencies, will coordinate a specific action plan for preparing for climate risks. The City will assess every essential network—including water, wastewater, transportation, power, gas and telecommunications—and will take steps to ensure that they are capable of withstanding a Category 2 Hurricane, record heat waves, or other natural disasters. We'll modernize our energy infrastructure by incentivizing large buildings and hospitals to invest in co-generation systems—which allow them to generate their own heat and power. We'll also explore how we can accelerate investments in distributed energy, micro-grids, energy storage, and smart grid technologies.

DEP played an important role in both formulating and implementing PlaNYC and past and ongoing climate change and adaptation studies, and will be protecting our infrastructure to new standards as we rebuild.

New Yorkers have never been shy about taking on big challenges—and taking our destiny into our own hands. With the head start provided by PlaNYC, we will confront this challenge head on and we will succeed.

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. [G](#)

Focus on the Field

Officer **David Grabiec's** career is a perfect match between his love of the outdoors and his role as a DEP police officer. Since 2009, he has patrolled the Neversink and Roundout areas of the upstate watershed. A normal day involves checking in on key facilities and monitoring the area for suspicious activity.



It also means enforcing the rules that preserve the natural beauty and exceptional water quality of NYC's upstate watershed. This means keeping people out of restricted areas and ensuring that visitors have the proper permits and equipment. In one case, it even meant stopping an illegal deer hunting operation. Recently, while on patrol, Officer Grabiec responded to a report of shots fired and detained an armed individual who admitted to using a spotlight and shooting from a car to harvest deer. This individual was taken into custody and issued numerous environmental summonses.

Grabiec's days can also last longer than a normal eight hour shift. The DEP police's partnership with local and State law enforcement agencies means on occasion he is called upon to respond to 911 calls and other emergencies. This

was especially true after Hurricane Sandy. Grabiec and his colleagues spent long hours assisting local residents by providing them with dry ice and other supplies during the three-day power outage.

An avid hunter and outdoorsman, Grabiec understands the importance of providing access to the public while balancing the needs of the water supply system. The fact that, "you never know what a day will bring" is one of his favorite parts of the job.

Although Grabiec spends his work days in and around the watershed, in his spare time he enjoys hunting and fishing in the same watershed he is so proud to protect.

Kudos Corner



As the recovery from Hurricane Sandy continues, on Saturday, December 8, members of BWSO's Bluebelt Unit were joined by staff from BCIA and Executive Administration to supervise and participate in a cleanup of the New Creek Bluebelt in the Midland Beach neighborhood on Staten Island. Among the volunteers who assisted in the event were Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members from OEM, as well as New York Interscholar Association students and Con Ed employees recruited through NYC Service.

The more than 70 volunteers quickly filled up approximately nine dump trucks with trash and other debris and left approximately 150 cubic yards of additional debris for pickup by the Department of Sanitation. While the event was highly successful, there is still more post-hurricane work to be done, and another cleanup will be scheduled for January.

Special thanks to DEP's volunteers, including **Matt Mahoney, Sara Pecker, Dana Gumb, Jim Garin, Robert Brauman, Dean Cavallaro, James Rossi, Helene Amato, Eva Lynch, Lillie Farrell, Denise Hubbard, Kerry-Ann Gordon, Julissa Vargas** and **Sandrine Moore-Straw**.

Holiday Celebration



(Recreationally Speaking... continued)

once marked the start of hunting as an official holiday.

While deer hunting ends in mid-December, hunting for small game such as rabbits and grouse continues well into February.

"Our land includes a lot of old fields, which make good small-game habitat," said **Paul Lenz**, Section Chief for City Land Stewardship at DEP, who also hunts on city land with his beagle in his free time.

Hiking trails that snake through the watershed also change, becoming areas for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. In recent years, DEP has even granted land-use permits to three snowmobiling clubs that use a state-sanctioned trail network that crosses city land.

Winter recreation is not limited to land—it also continues on some reservoirs long after they've frozen. Reservoirs east of the Hudson River, except Kensico and New Croton, are open to ice fishing for those who have a fishing license and DEP access permit. Many of the reservoirs are located close enough to Metro North Railroad lines that city residents can use public transportation alone to reach them.

"There are some times when you'll see up to 15 to 20 people ice fishing on just one reservoir," said **Kenny**

LeBarron, a Regional Land Steward for DEP.

Several fish species live in the reservoirs, including trout, bass, perch and walleye.

DEP sometimes closes ice fishing areas when the temperature is mild and the ice is too thin to safely fish. Those interested in ice fishing can call the Mahopac office at (914) 232-1309 for information on ice conditions.

The upstate watershed is also a great place to observe rare and majestic animals, including the bald eagle.

Bald eagles have established a nesting site on Route 55A, alongside the Rondout Reservoir, where they can be seen flying and sometimes diving to hunt for fish. DEP staff have also reported bald eagles flying regularly over the Ashokan Reservoir. Both sites are viewable from public areas.

The bald eagle is a threatened species in New York, but its population has begun to rebound in recent decades. As of 2010, New York was home to 173 breeding pairs of eagles, which fledged 244 young.

More information about recreation opportunities can be found on DEP's website under the menu link labeled "Watershed Recreation."

DEP DECEMBER BLOOD DRIVE: Grahamsville Region Area: 12/13, American Red Cross (Grahamsville Parking Lot), from 10 am to 3:00 pm; **Downsville Region Area:** 12/12, Downsville Fire Hall, from 9 am to 2:00 pm; **Kensico/Highland Regions - Sutton Park Area:** 12/13, Sutton Park, 2nd Floor, Large Training Room, from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.

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