NYC Environmental Protection

Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Carter Strickland, Commissioner

WEEKLY PIPELINE

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State of the City

Photo Credit: Rob Bennett

Yesterday, **Mayor de Blasio** delivered his first State of the City speech at the La Guardia Community College Performing Arts Center in Long Island City. The Mayor discussed the core values we share as New Yorkers and laid out the new Administration's vision for where they will lead the city in the weeks and months to come. He also recognized the hard work and commitment of the city's workforce and discussed his pledge to pursue an economic strategy that will grow whole sectors of small businesses, including those that produce green jobs.

Read the entire speech here.

Spotlight on Safety

Winter Tire Care

Have you heard the myth that reducing tire pressure provides better traction on snow and ice?

The fact is that reducing tire pressure to increase traction on snow and ice simply does not work.

Underinflated tires cause a vehicle to react more slowly to a driver's attempts to steer and brake—and driving in rain, snow, and ice further affects a driver's ability to control the vehicle. During winter months, drivers should check tire pressure frequently and ensure that they are kept at recommended levels of inflation, which can be found on the stickers inside the door of the vehicle.

DEP has installed a tire compressor on the Lefrak rooftop parking deck to help drivers keep tire pressure at recommended levels.

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

DEP is building physical infrastructure that lasts for decades, but who will operate and maintain the system, and plan for system upgrades? The answer is the children who are going to grade school today and will be engineers in just 10 to 15 years. That is why every year DEP's Education Office in our Bureau of Public Affairs (BPA) works with thousands of students at hundreds of schools to educate youngsters about our water supply and wastewater systems. One of the highlights of DEP's educational programming is the annual *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest*, which invites students who attend public, independent, charter, and parochial schools (or who are home-schooled) in New York City and in the East and West-of-Hudson watersheds to create original art and compose poetry that reflects an appreciation for our shared water resources.

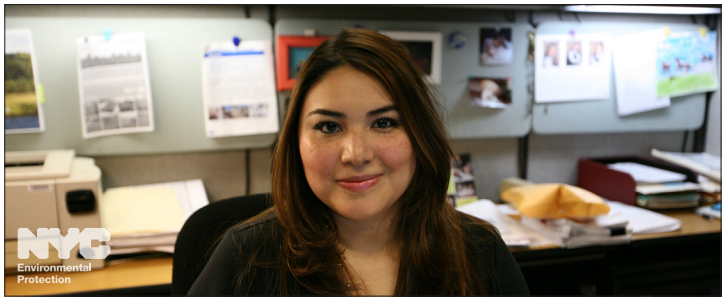
Last Friday, BPA announced that the Education Office is now accepting submissions for the *28th Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest*. Entries will be accepted until March 1, 2014 and may be submitted online, by mail, or delivered to DEP Headquarters. Entries submitted by mail or delivered must be 22" x 28" or smaller, and have a completed entry form attached securely on the back. This year's contest will also accept digital art and videos. An award ceremony honoring all student participants will take place in May.

The Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest is a great way to educate young New Yorkers about the network of reservoirs and protected lands that supply clean and healthy drinking water to more than half the state's population and the wastewater infrastructure that has helped us reconnect with our waterways and waterfront. Hundreds of students in New York City and watershed communities participate each year and their creativity and enthusiasm for learning about the water cycle is creating a tradition of environmental stewardship that will span generations.

Last year, more than 900 New York City and Watershed students from more than 50 schools submitted artwork and poems about NYC Water. In May, 2013, they were honored at an awards ceremony at Tribeca Performing Arts Center at Borough of Manhattan Community College where their artwork and poems were displayed. For this year's contest, teachers and parents (including DEP employees with second through twelfth graders) can visit www.nyc.gov/dep/artandpoetry to view the contest guidelines, submit entries online, and see past winners. The 2013 winning entries can also be viewed on DEP's Flickr page. I encourage you to share this information with your child's teacher or school administrator. Questions about this year's *Art and Poetry Contest* can be directed to educationoffice@dep.nyc.gov.

Finally, I want to thank **Kim Estes-Fradis**, **Lakeisha Bradshaw**, **Helene Amato**, and **Lilli Genovesi** from our Education Office for their dedication to educating the next generation of New Yorkers about the importance of a reliable supply of healthy drinking water and the wastewater infrastructure that has helped make our harbor cleaner than it has been in a century.

Focus on the Field



DEP's Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) is composed of roughly 1,800 employees whose varied responsibilities include operating the city's expansive wastewater collection system and 14 treatment plants, navigating local waterways in marine sciences and sludge vessels, and scores of engineers, chemists, and compliance specialists who support all of BWT's critical services. Helping to organize this vast operation is BWT Chief of Staff **Lucia Pena**.

Pena grew up in Sunnyside and attended William Cullen Bryant High School. In 1995 she began working as a Co-op Student in DEP's Human Resources Division and, when she continued her studies at Baruch College, she transferred over to the Bureau of Customer Services as a College Aide. In 2002, she earned a bachelor's degree in science and public affairs and, shortly thereafter, joined DEP full-time as a Budget Analyst for BWT.

As part of BWT's Management Analysis Section she assisted in compiling all expenditures for the wastewater treatment plants and prepared comprehensive reports for distribution within the bureau, and to DEP management and oversight agencies. In 2008, she was promoted to Chief of the Section and she and her team prepared annual funding requests for submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and coordinated and reported the bureau's overtime budget.

In 2010 Pena took on her current role as BWT's Chief of Staff and while she carried over some of her prior responsibilities, including the overtime budget and submissions to OMB, her primary role now is to support the entire bureau's operations, programs, and policies.

"Lucy's knowledge, experience, work ethic, and temperament have made her an indispensable and valued member of our team," said BWT Deputy Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza**. "The bureau's multiple operations generate reams of information and Lucy has a unique ability to quickly organize it into useable formats that allow us to make well-informed, data driven decisions."

Pena is involved in every aspect of BWT's operations, from compiling budget, health and safety, and compliance metrics for H2OStat meetings, to drafting justifications for funding requests, to supporting operations during emergencies such as Hurricane Sandy. To get direct input from field personnel, Pena also coordinates monthly staff meetings, focus groups, and surveys.

"Ever since I began working at DEP as a Co-op student, to my current role as BWT's Chief of Staff, I have always felt that there is something special about the people who work here," said Pena. "People are smart and feel passionate about the work. I feel very lucky to get to work with such a talented group of people. "

Pena still lives in Queens, now in the Maspeth neighborhood, and her eight year old daughter keeps her busy outside of the office. She also has two yellow labrador retrievers and is anxiously awaiting warmer weather so she can resume her daily trips to the park where the dogs can run and her daughter can enjoy the playground.

New Green Roof at The New School

In January, The New School opened its recently completed University Center near Union Square in Manhattan. One of New York City's greenest buildings, it was the recipient of a DEP Green Infrastructure Grant which helped to fund the installation of a green roof that absorbs rainfall and helps to improve the health of the Hudson River. Click here to see more photos.

The project was undertaken as part of a settlement for violations of New York State law and DEC regulations.

Welcome Aboard!

Yesterday, 14 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts** and Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Peter K. Ashaya, **Michael Frisch**, **Mark Preziose**, **Frank E. Rispoli**, and **Tom Strommen** with BWT; **Yaron Altman** and **Chandan Saha** with BWSO; **Melanie Mead** and **Nicholas Sadler** with BWS; **Ernest Collins** with FMC; **Ariel Hyman** with BEC; **Monalisa Mathieu** with BCS; **Rafael O. Perez** with Sustainability; and **Carolyn Wilmore** with BEDC.

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