NYC Environmental Protection

Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Emily Lloyd, Commissioner

WEEKLY PIPELINE

February 2, 2016

Volume VII • Issue 317

Watershed Recreation

In 2015, DEP opened more than 2,800 acres of city-owned property across the watershed for public recreation. These newly opened lands put the total over 130,000 acres for the first time, more than half of which is now open for access without the requirement of a DEP Access Permit. The newly opened properties include 2,260 acres in Delaware County, 424 acres in Greene County, 79 acres in Schoharie County, and 47 acres in Ulster County. DEP also removed permit requirements from 209 acres in the Catskills, making them even easier for the public to enjoy. To learn more click here.

Spotlight on Safety

Zika Virus

The Centers for Disease Control has issued a Zika Virus Health Advisory for travelers returning from Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. The virus is not contagious and cannot be spread by casual contact with an infected person. It can only be transmitted through a bite from an infected mosquito. There is currently no threat of contracting the virus in New York City. Further, mosquitos are generally not active in the city during cold weather months.

So far, three cases have been reported in New York City, and each infected person had recently traveled to affected areas. If you have recently traveled to any of these areas, be aware of the symptoms including fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Not everyone may experience symptoms but a blood test can determine if you have the virus. Although there are no specific treatments, medications can be used to relieve symptoms. Most people fully recover from Zika virus; however, there may be a link to birth defects in the babies of infected pregnant women.

As a precautionary measure, the City is preparing for the start of the mosquito season in April by expanding upon current mosquito control activities used to prevent West Nile Virus. For more information, visit the NYC Department of Health website.

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

As part of our continuing effort to reduce combined sewer overflows and further improve the health of our local waterways, we are undertaking a number of projects to optimize the capacity of the existing wastewater system. This spring we will begin a $33 million sewer upgrade project that modeling shows will prevent 225 million gallons of pollution from being discharged into Flushing Bay and Bowery Bay each year. The subsurface work will take place at five key junction points within the sewer system, located between LaGuardia Airport and Horace Harding Expressway, and will raise and lengthen the weirs that direct the wastewater to the Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant. The work is anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2018.

Throughout the roughly 7,500 miles of sewers located under the streets of New York City are numerous regulators, or junction points, where wastewater is either directed to a wastewater treatment plant or sent directly to a nearby water body. During dry weather, all the wastewater produced in the city, about 1.3 billion gallons a day, on average, gets cleaned at wastewater treatment plants. However, during heavy rain storms, the amount of stormwater entering the combined sewers can exceed the capacity of the system and, in order to avoid backups into homes and businesses, the excess flows over weirs in the regulators and gets diverted to a local water body. This project will upgrade five of the key regulators located within the roughly 15,000-acre Bowery Bay drainage area. The subsurface work will include relocating some utilities, expanding two of the regulator chamber areas, raising and lengthening the weirs to direct more wastewater to the Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant and any necessary structural repairs. The project is one component of an agreement with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The five regulators slated for upgrades are located at:

- LaGuardia Airport Maintenance Yard
- Ditmars Boulevard and 100th Street
- Ditmars Boulevard and 31st Drive
- 108th Street and 43rd Avenue
- 108th Street and Horace Harding Expressway

DEP presented details of the project to Community Board 4 in November and a meeting with Community Board 3 is expected to take place in February. Due to heavy traffic volume at some of the work sites, we worked closely with the Department of Transportation to ensure this important work would have a minimal impact. To that end, the work at 108th Street under the Long Island Expressway overpass will only take place during overnight hours and there will be no impact at any time to traffic on Horace Harding Expressway. I'd like to thank all the staff in the Bureaus of Engineering, Design and Construction and Wastewater Treatment for their work on this project. To learn more click here.

DEP Fire Wardens

To have an effective Fire Safety/Emergency Action Plan (FS/EAP) at Lefrak Operations, it is important that certain DEP employees are designated as FS/EAP Wardens, Deputy FS/EAP Wardens, and Searchers. In order to perform their duties, employees fulfilling these roles receive annual training in the Emergency Action Plan and Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan by an FDNY approved and certified training consultant. In fire and non-fire situations, and other emergencies, Wardens communicate with the building's FS/EAP Safety Director to confirm that all occupants on the floor are informed and, if warranted, ushered to the nearest safe exits. After evacuation from the building, Wardens also ensure that employees are led to a secure pre-determined location until emergency personnel clear the building as safe for re-entry. At the start of every day, Wardens are required to sign in at the front desk of their assigned building. If a Warden is absent, Deputy Wardens will step-in to fulfill their duties. During an evacuation, Searchers are responsible for performing area sweeps of their floors to make sure everyone is vacating the area and proceeding to the evacuation point. To identify the Wardens, Deputy Wardens, and Searchers for your floor, you can go to the FMC page on the Source and review the Fire Warden lists for the high rise and low rise, or check the staffing chart next to the fire warden phone on your floor.

Managing for Excellence

In January, the most recent class of DEP managers completed the Managing for Excellence course. This is the 3rd year of the program and thus far, more than 500 managers have completed the course. The next class will begin in March 2016.

Owen Marshall, **Steven Wallace**, **Addae Oliver**, **T.C. McLaurin**, **Krishna Persaud**, **Michael Roach**, **Vincent Mattarella**, **Steven Roldan**, **Winston Shirley**, **Rubin Hernandez**, **Patrick Hendricks**, **Harris Lam**, **Jamilla Rosa**, **Jacqueline Holly**, **Carol Brooks**, **Carol Davis**, **Vivian Kwok**, and **Yin Zhu Chin-Hong** with BCS; **Lo Chan**, **Santo Cimino** and **Rosanna Pullara** with ACCO; **Susan Mathys** and **Danielle Cantwell** with BWS; **Susan Gordon** with BLA; **Sara Pecker** with BPAC; **Tamara Williamson** with BEDC; **Antoinette Quinones** with OD&HR; **Yocanda Baez** with BWSO and **Galina Dreyzina** with EHS.

Cannonsville Culverts

Have you ever seen a structure like this one that allows water to flow under a road or trail? It's called a culvert. We just completed a project to repair four large box culverts in the Cannonsville Reservoir watershed. The repairs help to promote water quality, protect roadways, and reduce flooding by ensuring that four local brooks flow properly through the culverts, unimpeded by debris and sediment from previous storms. Go here for more information.

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