

## Black History Month Celebrated

On Friday, Feb. 28, the Office of EEO & Diversity held its Black History Month event themed, "Food for the Soul." There were several interactive activities, a diverse array of food, refreshments, and a cultural performance. DEP employees donated an assortment of food that included candied yams, cold pasta with shrimp, BBQ wings, chicken and waffles, coconut rice, mac and cheese, plantains, and sweet potato and cheese cake pies. There was also a special performance presented by **Edouard Beaubrun** from BCS, who played the Djembe—a drum that originates from West Africa. We want to thank everyone who volunteered and donated to this event. Special shout out to the Black History Month Quiz winners: **Sachia Elam, Edwin Yu, Rachel Reeves, Xiangjie Zhao and Angela Oei.**



## Spotlight on Safety

### Shut it Off! No Engine Idling

NYC has sought to reduce air pollution through laws and fines related to engine idling. When driving a city—or any other—vehicle, intentional engine idling while parking, standing, or stopping is restricted. No motorized vehicle can idle for longer than 3 minutes—near schools, the requirement for idling is even more stringent—1 minute!

Vehicles are exempt from the idling laws **ONLY** if they are:

- an authorized emergency vehicle
- being used to operate equipment connected to the vehicle during work, or to load or unload materials

Idling wastes millions of gallons of fuel each year. Harmful pollutants emitted from idling vehicles, such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and toxic particulate matter cause air pollution and are hazardous to your health, causing respiratory and other problems. You can receive a citation from the NYPD & Traffic Enforcement Agents, Department of Sanitation, Department of Parks, and even DEP if you are caught violating the idling laws. So remember, no engine idling—shut it off! DEP recently kicked off the Billy Never Idles campaign to educate the public on the effects of idling. For more information visit the [campaign 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 [EHS EMPLOYEE CONCERNS](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.

## Commissioner's Corner



**Vincent Sapienza**  
Commissioner

As we face the unprecedented challenge of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), our elected leaders and government professionals are taking some extraordinary steps to protect public health. As you all know, **Mayor de Blasio** has closed public schools, bars and restaurants are only open for take-out and delivery, and entertainment venues have been closed. This new reality also means that the facts on the ground, our understanding of COVID-19, and the measures being put in place to combat it are changing very quickly. That means the best thing we can do is to listen to our leaders, be as well informed as possible, and immediately put into practice their recommendations.

As there is now widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in New York City, meaning the sources of new infections are unknown, everyone in the city and the watersheds should be monitoring their health closely and staying home from work if they have any flu-like

symptoms. As DEP provides such critical services to nearly half the state of New York, many of us must report to work and do our part to protect public health. However, we are balancing that critical need with the new reality and instituting a telework initiative, staggered shifts, and new protocols in order to reduce social interaction amongst employees and the public. Please seek out guidance from your supervisor or bureau administrators if you have any questions. Rest assured that our human resources and labor relations teams are working around the clock, and seeking guidance from City Hall and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, to address any and all individual questions and requests, so please be patient.

The most recent guidance from our Office of Environmental, Health and Safety can be [found here](#) and the most up to date information from Mayor de Blasio can be [found here](#). Let's all do our best to stay calm and well informed. Thank you, as always, for your cooperation in keeping our community safe and healthy as we fulfill our critical missions.



### PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

- Keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.



### IF YOU ARE SICK

- Stay home.
- If you have a cough, shortness of breath, fever, sore throat and do not feel better after 3-4 days, consult with your doctor.
- If you need help getting medical care, call 311.
- NYC will provide care regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.

## Earth Week is Still On



In light of precautions being taken with regard to COVID-19, all presentations have been changed to webinars. All employees will be able to attend via Microsoft Teams, Webex, Zoom, and Go2Webinar. Visit the [Earth Week Calendar](#) to see what is being offered. In order to register for these DEP presentations, please contact your bureau's training coordinator. If you have any questions regarding the technical assistance, please contact the [BIT Service Desk](#). If you have any questions regarding Earth Week, please contact [Workforce Development and Training](#). We hope you enjoy the presentations and cannot wait to bring more opportunities to you during this time.

## Watershed Never Idles



DEP workers in the watershed recently showed their support for the [Billy Never Idles](#) campaign, posing in the commemorative give-away T-shirts and playfully mean-mugging for the cameras. Employees from the Kingston office, as well as staff and recruits from the Staff Sgt. Robert H. Dietz DEP Police Academy, also in Kingston, gave the lens their best snarling face in homage to Billy Idol, the campaign's anti-idling spokesperson. Idol, a renowned rock star and environmentalist, joined with Mayor Bill de Blasio at City Hall to kick off DEP's new anti-idling advertising and publicity campaign. The campaign is part of a larger anti-idling initiative aimed at boosting public awareness on the harmful effects of idling, expanding enforcement of anti-idling laws, and encouraging individuals to file citizen complaints. In 2018, DEP began a "Citizens Air Complaint Program" where individuals who witness and record a truck or bus idling can file a complaint online with DEP and collect 25% of the penalty, \$87.50 of a \$350 fine. The public awareness campaign encourages drivers to shut off their engines to reduce idling and increase accountability for commercial vehicles.

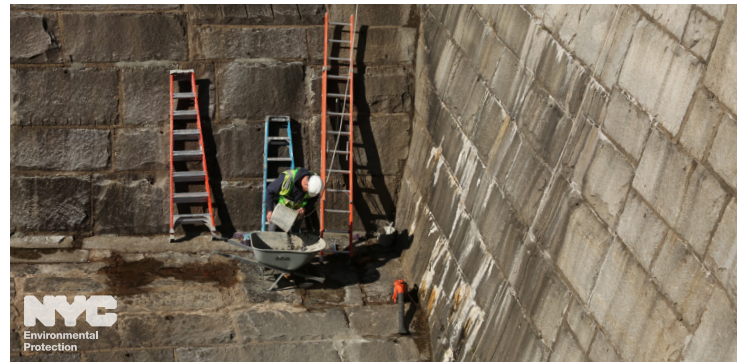


## DEP Seeking Summer Interns



College students are encouraged to apply for summer job opportunities with DEP through its annual internship program. The program this year is offering 86 paid internships in the fields of engineering, sciences, urban planning, legal affairs, information technology, customer service, administration, and more. Those accepted into the 10-week summer internship program will have the chance to work alongside a diverse team of highly skilled DEP employees who operate the nation's largest municipal water and wastewater utilities, and enforce air and noise regulations throughout the five boroughs. The vast majority of the internships are located at DEP headquarters in Queens; two of the positions will be at DEP Archives in Manhattan; and 15 internships are based upstate in the New York City watershed. Information about all internships, including online applications, can be found on the [DEP website](#). [Follow DEP on LinkedIn](#) to receive the latest updates for all career opportunities.

## Maintainers Repoint Neversink Spillway



The Neversink Reservoir Dam recently underwent a bit of masonry Botox as several DEP workers filled in various cracks and made sure its spillway face was smooth. The work occurred back in the fall, when the reservoir's water level sat below the top of the spillway and the upstream face of the dam was accessible because of the low water level. The Grahamsville-based crew spent several weeks cleaning old, cracked concrete out of the joints between the spillway's stone blocks and filling them with fresh concrete. Filling the cracks—the largest was perhaps 18 inches long—consumed more than 8,400 pounds of mortar. In addition to the masonry undertaking, workers also collected driftwood that had fallen into the spillway.

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov).**