

Rain, Rain, Come Today



During the severe drought of 1949-1950, New York City was in desperate need of water and the Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity (DWSGE) led a highly successful conservation campaign while its sister agency, the Board of Water Supply, relentlessly advocated for the expansion of the Delaware system to increase available supply. Not content to sit and wait for rain, the DWSGE made its own, rather unconventional, attempt to increase the supply—they hired the services of a rainmaker.

Weather modification was a hot topic at the time as news outlets

reported the successful results of a U.S. government cloud seeding experiment in New Mexico known as “Project Cirrus.” And, on February 20, 1950, Harvard meteorologist Dr. Wallace B. Howell traveled to New York City to meet with Mayor William O’Dwyer and DWSGE Commissioner Stephen Carney to discuss a rainfall stimulation project. Dr. Howell conferred with the Project Cirrus team, conducted extensive technical research, and was awarded a contract “to conduct an experimental program for snow and rain stimulation for the purpose of attempting to increase

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Spotlight on Safety

National Safety Month 2013

Each year in June, the National Safety Council encourages organizations and its employees to participate in National Safety Month in order to educate and influence behavior that can lead to preventable injuries and deaths.

“Safety Starts With Me” is this year’s theme, and recognizes the fact that we should all feel personally responsible for our own safety, that of our co-workers, families, and the public we serve. In recognition of National Safety Month, Spotlight on Safety will focus on the following important safety topics in June:

- Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls
- Employee Wellness
- Emergency Preparedness
- Ergonomics

Did you know that slips, trips, and falls accounted for 14 percent of all accidental deaths in 2011? Pay attention to the work at hand, and don’t be distracted by other activities, including cell phone use. Momentary lapses of attention can result in serious injury.

For more information visit the [National Safety Council](#) and [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



DEP is committed to attracting and retaining talented employees and an important part of that effort is our summer internship program. Yesterday, I had the opportunity to join Deputy Commissioner **Diana Jones Ritter** at the Newtown Creek Visitors Center to welcome this year’s class of 75 interns. We received applications from 1,500 students majoring in engineering, computer sciences, and environmental studies.

The ten week summer program gives both graduate level and undergrad students an inside look at the important work DEP employees do every day while making meaningful contributions to our mission. The summer interns will be assigned to all of DEP’s bureaus, at locations from the watersheds to Staten Island, and will be exposed to other areas of the agency through weekly meetings and facility tours—similar to the brown bag presentations we have launched for all employees. At the end of the summer the interns will make group presentations to DEP’s senior staff concerning their projects. I encourage everyone to integrate the interns into all of our projects and take full advantage of this invaluable resource.



Also yesterday, I joined NYS Department of Environmental Con-

servation Regional Director **Venetia Lannon**, City Council Member **Diana Reyna**, and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Director of Energy and Sustainability **Rory Christian** to announce the completion of a Neighborhood Green Infrastructure Demonstration Area in Brooklyn’s Bushwick neighborhood. The morning rainfall allowed us to demonstrate the 19 newly installed bioswales managing the stormwater. The entire installation will prevent more than 1 million gallons of stormwater from reaching the combined sewer system each year and help reduce overflows into Newtown Creek. NYCHA’s Hope Gardens Houses are located within the Demonstration Area and work began last week on construction of a rain garden to absorb stormwater from walkways and porous pavement and a subsurface retention system in a parking lot. When construction is completed later this summer, the installation will manage an additional 700,000 gallons of stormwater each year, further improving the health of the water in Newtown Creek. Flow monitoring devices placed in the sewer will provide us with valuable data about the volume of stormwater the network of bioswales, rain gardens, and porous pavement will keep out of the system and will inform the design of future projects. We have set an ambitious schedule for our green infrastructure program and I’d like to recognize the hard work of Deputy Commissioner **Angela Licata**, Assistant Commissioner **Magdi Farag**, Director **Margot Walker**, Project Managers **Mikelle Adgate** and **Kerry Lowe**, Engineers **Raymond Palmares**, **Tetyana Klymenko**, **Josh Landecker**, **Kathryn Prybylski**, and **Derick Tinning**, and **Sarah Bloom**.

Focus on the Field



Working with numbers and balancing budget sheets is **Diane Cipollina's** expertise. She serves as Deputy Director of the Other Than Personal Services (OTPS) unit in DEP's Budget Office, and her division is responsible for reviewing the agency's expenses. Cipollina's duties include monitoring how DEP's bureaus budget for items such as supplies, equipment, contractual services, gasoline, heat, power, and taxes, among other things. She also prepares and summarizes expense budgets during the budget cycles each year, in accordance with the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) requirements, and provides similar information to other oversight agencies, such as FEMA.

She also has to be prepared for things that are not budgeted for. For example, since Hurricane Sandy, Cipollina has been working to carefully document all of DEP's expenses and damages that are eligible for federal reimbursement. "This is the best part of the job because you gain a familiarity with

how the whole agency operates," said Cipollina, who previously worked for both OMB and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

"Diane has been great to work with, she is very thorough and has lots of energy," said Director of OTPS **Steve Sadoski**. "Applying for federal reimbursement requires a lot of coordination and Diane does a great job of working with DEP project managers to ensure that all of the damage from Hurricane Sandy is properly accounted for."

During her five years at DEP, Cipollina has earned a reputation for the accuracy and timeliness of the information she provides. "Every dollar DEP spends is public money so it is critical that we carefully account for and document all of our expenses," she said. Cipollina shares much of the credit for her success with her colleagues, including Budget Analysts **Marilyn Towns-Jones** and **Albert Auyeung**.

"DEP is really fortunate to have dedicated staff like Diane," said Senior Director, Expense & Miscellaneous Budgets **Loncey Conyers**. "Her work helps keep the books balanced and ensures that DEP is reimbursed for expenses incurred due to unexpected events like Hurricane Sandy."

Cipollina holds a degree in economics from Fordham University. When she's not crunching numbers at DEP, she spends time with her family and enjoys playing tennis, football, and basketball with her husband and three children.

Restoration of Jamaica Bay Habitat



Photo Credit: US Army Corps of Engineers/Great Lakes Dredge & Dock, LLC; Stefan Turner Aerial Photography

Partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, since 2006 DEP has invested more than \$10 million in projects to restore marsh islands in Jamaica Bay, including the placement of sand and the planting of wetland vegetation. The above photo shows the recently constructed Yellow Bar, Black Wall, and Rulers Bar marsh islands.

Neversink by Kayak



The Memorial Day weekend marked the opening of the recreational boating season on some of DEP's Catskill reservoirs and the Water Board's **Alexis Henry** and **Joya Cohen** of the Bureau of Legal Affairs took the opportunity to do some kayaking on the Neversink Reservoir. Go here [for more information on the recreational boating season](#). Working with the Catskill Watershed Corporation, DEP will allow approved businesses to store kayaks and canoes at racks alongside the reservoirs this year. By providing ready access to rental boats, this program will make it easier for residents and visitors to enjoy some of New York's most scenic waterways, and the expanded recreational boating program will provide another boost to the Catskill tourism economy.

(Rain, Rain, Come Today... continued)

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RAINFALL STIMULATION PROJECT - DAILY LOG - FEBRUARY 1950

Date	
February 20	Traveled to New York City at request of Mayor O'Dwyer and conferred with the Mayor, Commissioner Carney, Chief Engineer Clark, and members of the Department of Water Supply, regarding the possibility of organizing a project for rainfall stimulation.
February 22	Drafted preliminary report to Commissioner Carney on rainfall stimulation project. Drew up agenda for discussion with Dr. Langmuir and others of Project Cirrus.
February 23	Traveled to Schenectady, New York, conferred with Dr. Irving Langmuir, Dr. Vincent Schaefer, Mr. R. Falconer, Mr. William Lewis, and others, about the application of the results of Project Cirrus investigations to the projected rainfall stimulation project.

NYC Environmental Protection

precipitation," at the substantial sum of \$100 per day.

Howell's first cloud modification flight took place on March 28, 1950 and over the course of the following year he conducted numerous rounds of "cloud seeding." Howell employed both the older method of dropping dry ice from an airplane and the new method, developed by Project Cirrus, of generating silver iodide smoke from the ground. Other city agencies pitched in to assist with the endeavor: the NYPD Aviation unit provided a plane, the Municipal Broadcasting System loaned a microammeter for measuring electrical currents, and Robert Moses loaned two Parks Department vehicles. The U.S. Weather Bureau also cooperated by providing radar equipment and special flight forecasts.

By mid-August, Dr. Howell had conducted 29 rounds of cloud seeding and the city's reservoirs were once again nearing capacity. Howell was characteristically cautious when assessing the overall impact of his cloud seeding experiment, stating that his activities had created "very little rain that would not have fallen

anyway," and he later estimated that the effort had increased precipitation by 14 percent. However, when heavy rains came in the form of a devastating storm on November 25, 1950, there was substantial disagreement as to whether they had come of their own accord or as a result of Howell's experiment. Land owners who suffered damages were convinced it was due to Howell and his cloud seeding, and although the resulting \$2 million in claims against the city were eventually dismissed, it undoubtedly left officials wary of venturing further into weather modification. While the city had previously said that it was satisfied with Howell's efforts and would consider using his services again, Dominick Paduano, Carney's successor as DWSGE Commissioner, felt otherwise, stating that "(T)his department has no present or future intention to engage in seeding clouds." True to its word, the agency rebuffed Howell's overtures to repeat the experiments during the severe water shortage of 1965, instead focusing on an intensive water conservation campaign to combat that drought, the worst in the city's history.

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