

EXHIBIT 7

Open in app ↗

Sign up

Sign in



Search



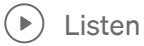
#NeverForget: A Look Back at DEP's 9/11 Response



NYC Water Staff · Follow

Published in NYC Water

5 min read · Sep 11, 2017



Listen



Share



As the city reflects on the 16th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, we especially honor the work of our first responders on that tragic day. Whether they came from the New York Police Department, Fire Department of New York (FDNY), Office of Emergency Management, the Port Authority, National Guard, Army Corps of Engineers or Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the city will forever owe a debt of gratitude to those whose dedication was boundless in the hour of our greatest need.

Just like many other City agencies, DEP played a critical role in the emergency response to 9/11. With all large-scale fires, DEP ensures that the Fire Department has sufficient water pressure to fight the flames. September 11 was no different. DEP immediately provided support to FDNY crews around the site perimeter, jointly commanding operations to check and maintain the necessary pressure levels. After the towers collapsed, DEP shut down a radius from Rector Street to the Battery and from Broadway to the Hudson River, controlling the flow of water into Ground Zero from broken mains and an interceptor sewer pierced by one of the south tower's steel girders. The surrounding infrastructure had to be inspected and repaired expeditiously, as the compromised pipes could not support the heavy machinery needed to proceed with rescue and recovery. In addition, the thousands of first responders and evacuees taking shelter in the surrounding buildings were in need of fresh water and sanitary sewers.



As described by Water and Sewer Operations Supervisor **Dennis Delaney**, “Very

quickly, it became a situation where you had to get water back to the recovery effort.” In 12–16 hour shifts, the bureau worked to repair damage and restore service, resting only when the site’s lack of electricity prevented them from continuing after dark. DEP steadily reduced the size of the restricted area, eventually reaching the base of the fallen towers to re-activate needed fire hydrants.

Meanwhile, DEP’s Hazardous Materials Specialists arrived on the scene, establishing a command post at Reade Street after taking shelter from the collapse in the World Financial Center parking garage. The specialists took bulk samples of asbestos-containing materials from the surrounding area and had them analyzed by our asbestos lab. Through this sampling, a perimeter was established with a comprehensive asbestos air-monitoring program of 38 monitoring stations in the downtown area. DEP specialists would remain onsite for months, overseeing operations over 16–18 hour shifts. Among DEP’s Environmental Compliance staff on scene was Chief of Enforcement **Joe Scafidi**, an integral part of emergency operations throughout the recovery effort.

“We were at every interagency meeting, every day, until Christmas,” Scafidi said.

Shortly after the collapse, a potential crisis came to the attention of DEP: A Freon tank seven stories underground. If heated, the Freon could produce deadly phosgene gas and further endanger the lives of first responders working above. A team that included Specialist **Chris Haas** descended below ground with an inflatable raft, navigating the wreckage of the building’s foundation to secure the tank. To the relief of everyone on site, the crew ascertained that the tank had not been breached, and the Freon was secure.



As recovery operations continued, DEP was instrumental in the effort to clean public spaces — most notably in the re-opening of the New York Stock Exchange just days after the attacks. Our Environmental Compliance staff undertook the methodical process of cleaning building roofs and facades, performing door-to-door inspections and providing informational materials to owners. In addition to notifying owners of available assistance programs and subsidies, DEP helped establish an 800-number hotline for downtown tenants that matched callers with federal, state and local assistance programs. Led by Asbestos Control Program Director **Krish Radhakrishnan**, the program ultimately cleaned more than 1,000 buildings downtown over the following two years.

Back at headquarters, after witnessing the events from the windows of Lefrak City during a weekly senior staff meeting, then Chief of Staff **Charles Sturcken** coordinated emergency response teams with then First Deputy Commissioner **Diana Chapin**.

Sturcken also undertook a three-pronged communication effort between our Water and Sewer Operations staff and the Commissioner, DEP and the Mayor's Office, and DEP and state and federal agencies. When our Water and Sewer operations staff could not drive their emergency response vehicle below Canal Street, they proceeded to the site on foot before eventually relocating to an Emergency Command Center at Broadway and Vesey Street. DEP also joined representatives from federal, state and city agencies uptown at the Emergency Command Center established at Pier 96; nearby was a resource center for families of the missing, an effort manned by dozens of DEP staff with colleagues from across city government.

As it became clear that the emergency was the result of a terrorist attack, DEP moved to swiftly shut down public access to the watershed in an operation extending 125 miles north. DEP's Police and Security Administration Inspector **Frank Milazzo** was then Commander of the Hillview Precinct, and helped execute the bureau security action plan. All of DEP's 124 police officers were assigned to fixed posts at critical infrastructure and directed security patrols. Officers began working 12-hour shifts and six-day weeks, a schedule which continued through December. DEP closed roads and bridges over dams, thoroughfares which remain closed to this day for security purposes. Like many of his colleagues, Milazzo began sleeping on a cot in his office after 16-hour work days.

The long hours were necessary given the enormity of the task; as Milazzo put it, "More than half the state's population relies on us."

All New Yorkers relied on the work of DEP in the days, weeks and months following the September 11 attacks. The agency's critical operations led efforts to maintain and repair our in-city infrastructure, clean the homes and offices of downtown tenants, and protect our air and water supply from future threats.

As Dennis Delaney summed up the work of his colleagues, "Our guys did a wonderful job — a very commendable job," adding succinctly: "They did what was required."

[Nyc Archives](#)[September 11](#)[Never Forget](#)[Stories From Dep](#)



Written by NYC Water Staff

926 Followers · Editor for NYC Water

Drink from the tap, flush the toilet, enjoy New York's waterways—we make sure everything flows according to plan.

More from NYC Water Staff and NYC Water



 NYC Water Staff in NYC Water

The Big Flush on Super Bowl Sunday?

There's an urban myth that goes something like this: the New York City water supply becomes stressed at halftime of the Super Bowl each...

3 min read · Feb 2, 2019

 16  2

