

## **Fleet Spotlight: Spiro Kattan, DSNY Fleet Sustainability**

By: Keith T. Kerman and Nate Koszer

In 1984 the original Macintosh computer was released, Terminator hit the big screen, and we all thought about the world as George Orwell foretold it.

In this same year, an extraordinary public servant and fleet and sustainability expert, Spiro Kattan, began his storied career as a city mechanic at NYC Parks (Parks). In those 40 years, Spiro has been a technical leader in the sustainable transformation of our City fleet and helped make New York City a national leader in clean and alternative fuel implementation.



Spiro graduated from New York City Technical College in 1983 with an associate degree in automotive technology. At Parks, Spiro specialized in electrical system troubleshooting. Spiro transferred to the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) in 1996 and joined the vehicle acquisition and warranty division. He prepared technical specifications for new equipment, worked on research and development projects, and conducted quality assurance inspections of new vehicle deliveries.

In 2001, Spiro was promoted to Supervisor of Mechanics and assigned to the Clean Fuels and Technology division where he worked to oversee the first testing and rollouts of compressed natural gas (CNG), biodiesel, ethanol (E85) and hybrid vehicles. He helped developed a truck emissions testing lab at DSNY, retrofitted thousands of DSNY trucks with diesel exhaust after treatment systems as required by Local Laws 39 and 77, and created greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies in accordance with PlaNYC.



*Electric DSNY Street Sweeper*

Since 2015, Spiro has served as Deputy Director of DSNY's Clean Fuels and Technology Division and has led innovative and emerging pathways to cutting emissions from the transportation sector working in partnership with DCAS and other agencies. Spiro has coordinated the expanding rollout of biofuels at DSNY, launched the first electric collection truck with nine more on their way, and introduced possibly the world's first all-electric sweeper with more all electric and plug in hybrid sweepers on order. Spiro has become a resource in the city and

nationally on the technical aspects of sustainable fleet implementation especially for the critical truck and specialized equipment sector.

Most recently, Spiro is on the forefront of the transition to an electric fleet and implementation of the [NYC Clean Fleet Plan](#). He is partnering with DCAS to transition all light and medium duty fleet units at DSNY to electric and plug in models, and to expand level 2, fast, and solar vehicle charging. Spiro is also leading the introduction of the first EV garbage trucks, sweepers, and rack trucks.

Currently, Spiro is working with DCAS to offer regular training for City mechanics in electric vehicle maintenance, repair, and safety with over 200 mechanics trained in FY23 alone. Spiro has also led DSNY's upgrade of the state inspection program, called VIP3, at all DSNY garages and leads the DSNY automotive diagnostic program with over 200 laptops in the field used to analyze servicing issues.



*DSNY electric packer*

DCAS recently announced the rollout of renewable diesel fuel across the City's fleet. DSNY is by far the largest diesel, and now renewable diesel, user. Spiro has played a critical role behind the scenes supporting this initiative, testing and evaluating the fuel, explaining the initiative within DSNY and citywide, and organizing the rollout.

In 2005, Spiro Kattan received the [Sloan Public Service Award](#) from the Fund for the City of New York. This recognition goes to only six NY public servants each year and has been referred to as the Nobel prize of New York public service.

This month, Spiro will begin his 40th year of service to New York City. Spiro is the very proud father of his daughter, Alyssa, who will be graduating from John Hopkins University in May of 2024. He currently lives with his fiancé, Lillian, in Brooklyn. Spiro has a younger sister named Raja and a twin brother John.

Spiro takes pride in everything he does. He attributes much of his success to his team, the support of his family and the leadership at DSNY. When interviewed for this spotlight, Spiro stated, "I have been blessed to work for NYC and honored to GREEN the largest municipal refuse fleet in the world."



*Spiro Kattan at 2023 Fleet Show with DSNY Deputy Commissioner Harte and DCAS Deputy Commissioner Keith Kerman*

“Spiro’s remarkable 40 years of dedication is a true testament to his relentless passion and a legacy of excellence, states **DSNY Deputy Commissioner Steve Harte**. “Throughout his tenure, Spiro has been the driving force behind numerous groundbreaking initiatives in the realm of alternative fuels. His visionary leadership has led to a significant reduction in tailpipe emissions within the DSNY fleet. Spiro’s contributions extend far beyond his work in expanding our EV charging infrastructure, providing essential mechanic training, and securing millions of

dollars in supplemental funding for alternative fuel vehicle development. However, his most outstanding achievement lies in his unwavering positive attitude, his steadfast commitment to helping others, his invaluable role as a mentor to our staff, and his commitment to instilling a total quality approach in his work. Spiro's impact on our organization and the people he has touched goes beyond words, exemplifying the very essence of dedication and excellence.”

“I have known and worked closely with Spiro Kattan for 30 years,” said **DCAS Deputy Commissioner and NYC Chief Fleet Officer Keith Kerman**. “In the 1990s, there was a small crew of us who focused on fleet sustainability and Spiro was our technical go to person even back then. Spiro matches an extraordinary commitment to service and sustainability, with technical expertise, and a wonderful and warm personality. He is a role model for everyone in fleet, public service, and beyond.”



*Spiro Kattan teaching course at DSNY!*

## **Even our toy fleet is going electric!**

NYC & Co has a licensing agreement with Greenlight and Daron to sell City fleet units from DSNY, NYPD, FDNY, Parks, DOT, TLC, and more.

And, for the first time, our toy fleet is going electric.

Check out the first [electric sanitation truck](#), with safety side-guards, and [EV taxi](#).

More electric toy options are coming soon.

Lots of [City fleet toys](#) are available online at the DCAS CityStore and make great gifts.



*Toy Sanitation truck*

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## Week In Review: December 3 - 9

Mayor Adams introduces the new Department of Correction Commissioner, announces investments to fight the opioid crisis on Staten Island and heads to Washington, D.C. to work on the asylum seeker crisis this week in New York City!





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## Check out past editions of the Fleet Newsletter

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 441, December 1, 2023](#): Renewable Diesel Replaces Fossil Fuel For New York City Fleet Trucks

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 440, November 3, 2023](#): DCAS and NYCHA Add Sustainability to Fleet Partnership

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 439, October 26, 2023](#): Mayor Adams Signs Fleet Electrification Law

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 438, October 16, 2023](#): Fleet Spotlight: DOT Roadway Repair and Maintenance (RRM)

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