

NYC Customer Service Newsletter

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"We're Looking Into It": City Starts Pilot Project to Flag Identified Street Conditions

Beginning November 23, 2009, DOT and DEP, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Operations, began testing new street decals to mark street conditions under ongoing repair. The pilot program is occurring in Brooklyn Community Board 6 (CB6).

When a customer calls 311 to report a condition for repair, a City inspector will visit the site and determine the necessary next steps. For many issues, private companies, utilities or other City agencies may be required to respond which may influence the duration of

repair. In order to improve customer service, provide greater transparency and reduce duplicate service requests, City inspectors will affix a small, bright orange decal adjacent to the site to let customers know the City is working to resolve the issue. For issues that are repaired immediately, no decal will be used.

One of the key issues the pilot attempts to address is the propensity for barricades and markers (i.e. cones) to be moved from a hazard shortly after marking by an inspector. The decal consists of a vinyl adhesive sheet with

a textured non-slip surface clear coating. Street inspectors apply the street decals in lieu of cones or spray paint.

For more information contact Craig Hosang, chosang@cityhall.nyc.gov



New Street Decal

DoITT Lending Library Celebrates 1st Anniversary

As part of efforts to build morale and encourage professional development, front-line team members at 311 established a "Lending Library" in 2008 with a collection of 22 books. Much like a city library books are loaned to members for free for two weeks. The Library was established with personal contributions and donations of new or gently used books. Topics focused on personal and professional enrichment, self-help themes, and skills-development.

Since launch in November, 2008 the Library has

grown to 200 books, dozens of authors, and topics spanning personal finance, health, computer technology, parenting skills, resume writing, and audio books. The Lending Library is managed by five volunteer Call Center Representatives (CCRs) who acquire and catalogue books, process check out and returns, and administer the program. In the first year over 100 call center employees checked out at least one book, with a total of 250 books checked out. Plans for Year 2 include

establishing a shared portal to further promote the program and track inventory; and partner with NYC Agencies to host wellness, financial, and career development workshops.

The Lending Library is a low-cost, high-value, easy-to-use program geared towards employees and administered by employees.

For more information on establishing a Lending Library please contact Stacy Ann Robinson at strobenson@doitt.nyc.gov

Ice Skating Rinks

Brooklyn

Abe Stark Ice Rink
1902 E 19th St Brooklyn, NY 11229
Coney Island Boardwalk and West
19th Street
(718) 946-6536 pr (718) 946-3135

Kate Wollman Rink, Prospect Park
E Dr & Lincoln Rd Brooklyn, NY
11225
Near Parkside & Ocean Avenue
entrance
(718) 287-6431 or (718) 287-5252

Manhattan

Lasker Rink, Central Park
Entrance just south of park entrance
at 110th Street & Lenox Avenue
(917) 492-3857 or (917) 492-3856

The Pond at Bryant Park
Between 40th and 42nd streets & 5th
and 6th avenues
(866) 221-5157

Wollman Rink, Central Park
Central Park at 63rd Street
(212) 439-6900

Queens

World Ice Arena, Flushing Meadows
Corona Park
125-40 Roosevelt Avenue, Queens,
NY 11368
(718) 760-9001

Staten Island

Cloves Lakes Park
1321 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY
10301
Victory Boulevard, west of Clove Road
(718)720-1010 or (718)720-1014

Parks Department Ice Skating Rink Survey Results

Winter may be with us, but the cold doesn't stop New Yorkers from enjoying parks. In fact a favorite wintertime activity amongst New Yorkers is ice skating. Parks conducted its first round of ice skating rink surveys this past winter to rate patrons' experiences. Three hundred and thirty four (334) surveys were collected at five of the seven skating rinks which are owned by parks and operated by concessionaires. The sites surveyed were Abe Stark and Kate Wollman Rink in Brooklyn, Lasker and Wollman Rink in Manhattan and Cloves Lakes in Staten Island.

Skating is a social and family event for most New Yorkers. Over 61% of those surveyed reported that they heard about the

rinks from friends or family, and 81% regularly go with others to skate. The largest group of skaters was parents bringing their children out for a night on the ice, followed by skaters who came in groups, and then couples.

Skaters reported the rinks to be well maintained, with 86% scoring them in good to excellent condition. A majority were pleased with the supervision and helpfulness of the staff at the rinks.

Most New Yorkers come to the rinks for family outings, free skate or memorable romantic dates. Organized programs, however, including figure skating and ice hockey leagues are also popular,

with 27% of our respondents participating in some type of organized skating activity. The Abe Stark rink offers the most extensive focus on skating programs with three fourths of those surveyed enrolled.

Parks ice skating rinks are also getting some needed investment. In Prospect Park, two new ice rinks and other recreational amenities are planned for the Lakeside Center. For more information about skating at Prospect Park, please go to <http://www.prospectpark.org/about/lakeside> or to Parks website at www.nyc.gov/parks.

For more information contact Keith Kerman at Keith.Kerman@parks.nyc.gov

**Wollman Rink Central Park
(Photo by Malcolm Pickney)**

Facts:

- **Opened in 1949**
- **300,000 skaters in first year**
- **4,000 skaters use it daily**
- **Ice Skating November through March**
- **Skate Rental and Lockers available**
- **Lessons available**



DOB Launches “Living Safely” Campaign

DOB launched a citywide campaign to educate New Yorkers about the dangers of illegally converted living spaces. The Living Safely campaign raises awareness about the typical signs of an illegal conversion and the potential consequences of living in such a dwelling.

As part of the campaign, inspectors, plan examiners and administrative staff teamed up with firefighters and members of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor’s Office of Community Affairs. Together they distributed

more than 60,000 flyers at major transportation hubs and houses of worship throughout the five boroughs. To reach as many communities as possible, the Department translated the flyers into 10 languages, including: Arabic; Bengali; Chinese; Haitian-Creole; Hindi; Korean; Russian; Spanish; Urdu; and Yiddish.

Illegally altered buildings and apartments violate the City’s construction codes and can pose serious risks to tenants, neighbors and first responders in the event of a fire or other emergency. In 2008, the

Department of Buildings issued more than 1,000 vacate orders for unsafe conditions related to illegal occupancies. By law, property owners are required to maintain their buildings in compliance with the City’s building and construction codes. If they don’t, they can face violations, monetary penalties and/or criminal charges. To report an illegal conversion or any other unsafe condition, please call 3-1-1.

For more information about the Living Safely initiative contact Lisa Lewis at lisalewis@buildings.nyc.gov

Living Safely Campaign by the Numbers:

3 Weeks

5 Boroughs

11 Languages

25 Distribution Sites

104 Department Volunteers

64,500 Flyers



Plan Examiner Bhadresh Patel distributes Living Safely fliers

DOHMH PODs Address H1N1 Vaccine Needs

DOHMH mounted a mass vaccination program for New Yorkers this fall to ensure that those most at risk for developing complications from H1N1 influenza were able to receive the vaccine. A total of 58 clinics were held over five weekends in November and December throughout the five boroughs, with almost 50,000 vaccinations administered.

These Point of Dispensing clinics, or PODs, were originally designed to serve middle and high school students, as an extension of the City’s school-based immunization program. After the first weekend, it was clear that the PODs could also accommodate

people from other priority groups for H1N1 vaccine.

Starting with the second week, they were opened to: individuals aged 4-24 years; individuals aged 25-64 years with underlying medical conditions making them more susceptible to complications from H1N1 flu; pregnant women; and caretakers and close contacts of infants younger than 6 months of age.

To take full advantage of the PODs’ capacity and the available vaccine, the Health Department opened the final week’s clinics to any New Yorker who wished to be vaccinated. A complete analysis of POD attendance will be available later this winter.

This vaccination campaign provided enhanced opportunities for New Yorkers to receive their H1N1 vaccine. It also allowed the Health Department to test its plans for future large-scale disease outbreaks, such as those that could occur as a result of bioterrorism, and it brought together staff from 19 New York City agencies to support an important public health initiative. Such cooperation would be vital during any future large-scale disease outbreaks. By each of these measures, the campaign was very successful.

For more information contact Anne Rinchiuso at arinchiu@health.nyc.gov or 212-676-8400

Top Ten Customer Service Tips

By Margo Chevers, author of *Stop the BS (Bad Service)*

1. Hire people who have a service attitude.
2. Make the customer's time with you an experience.
3. Regularly inform all your employees about what's going on in your company.
4. Make every decision with the customer in mind.
5. Make the customers an agenda item at every staff meeting.
6. Empower your employees to do the right thing.
7. Continually ask yourself how you can improve and add value.
8. Create an atmosphere of excellence.
9. Continually do the unexpected.
10. Never let an untrained employee have customer contact.

From www.ezinearticles.com
Go to the web site for more

NYCHA Moves to Serve Customers Better

In 2010 the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) will open three new customer contact centers to better serve its residents and applicants. While NYCHA continues to implement the technological component of the NYCHA Improving the Customer Experience (NICE) initiative, the Authority is also streamlining processes and relocating its Leased Housing (Section 8) and Application and Tenancy Administration (Applications) offices to create three new regional Customer Contact Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

On January 12, the Brooklyn Customer Contact Center will open in a new space to provide services to all Brooklyn and Staten Island Applications and Section 8 customers. On January 26, the Bronx Customer Contact Center will open in a newly renovated space to provide services

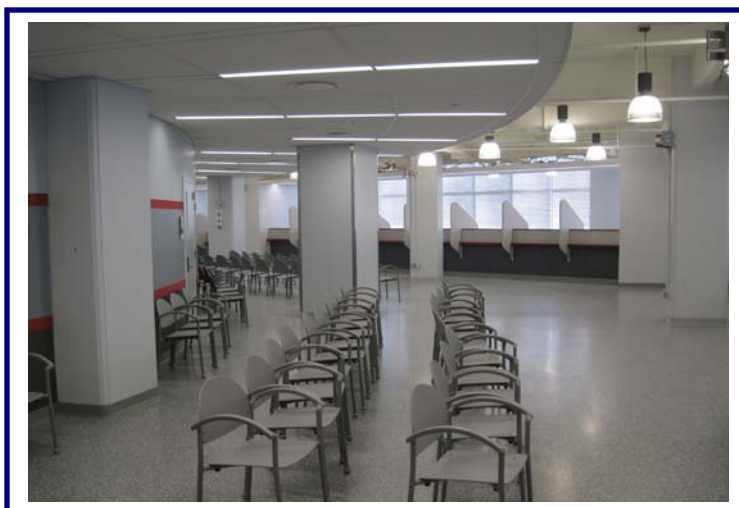
to all Manhattan and Bronx Applications and Section 8 customers. Applications customers living in Queens will receive services at the Section 8 facility in Corona, Queens, and both of these offices will relocate to a new Queens Customer Contact Center in May. These Customer Contact Centers will be equipped with an electronic traffic management system, to more effectively route customers to the appropriate staff.

The new Customer Contact Centers will primarily service NYCHA's Public Housing and Section 8 customers who have briefing, eligibility interview or hearing appointments. All other customers will be serviced via NYCHA's website and call center. Customers who visit NYCHA's website (www.nyc.gov/nycha) can complete and print many online forms, including the Public Housing application, which in the past they could only obtain in person or via

a phone request. In January, customers can call (718) 707-7771 from 8am to 5pm - one centralized phone number regardless of the borough where they reside - to obtain application status updates, modify contact information, request special Section 8 inspections, and receive inspection results.

NYCHA's new phone and online self-service options will eliminate the need for many office visits, thereby reducing wait times and improving NYCHA's service delivery. Once technology is fully integrated into the NICE initiative, Applications and Section 8 customers throughout the City will be able to visit any Customer Contact Center to get the housing help that they need, regardless of where they live.

For more information contact John Devine, Customer Contact Center, Director at john.devine@nycha.nyc.gov or (718) 707-7766.



Reception area at new NYCHA Customer Contact Center in Brooklyn

NYCertified: New Initiative for NYC Volunteer Translators and Interpreters

The Mayor's Office is dedicated to serving the increasingly large and diverse number of Limited English Proficient (LEP) New Yorkers. A Limited English Proficient (LEP) individual is a person who has a limited ability to speak, read, write or understand English at a level that permits him/her to communicate effectively in the course of applying for or receiving agency services or benefits.

To address LEP needs, the Mayor's Office of Operations and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs created a new volunteer program called NYCertified. Through this program, City employees who volunteer as interpreters and

translators will have the option to be tested, trained and certified in language proficiency, interpretation and translation skills. NYCertified recognizes the value of the services currently provided by agency Language Bank volunteers, and expects the training and certification to motivate more City employees to volunteer their language services.

NYCertified is being developed to help New York City agencies comply with Executive Order 120, which reaffirms the City's commitment to provide excellent customer service to all New Yorkers, including the

LEP population. Executive Order 120 created a centralized language access policy and mandated that all agencies providing direct public services ensure meaningful access to their services to all New Yorkers. NYCertified will ensure quality interpretation and translation for LEP clients and will allow for vital information about customer needs to be shared quickly, regardless of the language spoken.

A pilot program will be launched in early 2010.

For more information, please email NYCertified@cityhall.nyc.gov

NYC LEP Facts

More than 150 languages spoken

Almost half of NYC residents speak a language other than English at home

Approximately 1.8 million New Yorkers are classified as limited English proficient (LEP) – making up almost 25% of the City's population.

DOT's Multilanguage Alternate Side of the Street Parking Calendars for 2010 Now Available

The Department of Transportation has made available in six languages the 2010 Alternate Side of Street Parking (ASP) Calendars. The languages other than English include: Spanish, Chinese Mandarin, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian and Italian (see image to right for Italian calendar).

Customers can find these ASP calendars on the NYCDOT website and 311. Important information on the calendars includes dates on which Parking Rules are suspended, for example on major holidays.

2010 Disposizioni sul parcheggio alternato
Sospensione del calendario

Capodanno*	1 gennaio, ven.
Completano di M.L. King Jr.	18 gennaio, lun.
Completano di Lincoln	12 febbraio, ven.
Capodanno lunare astrale	14 febbraio, ven.
Completano di Washington (giornata del presidente)	15 febbraio, lun.
Mercoledì delle Ceneri	17 febbraio, mer.
Parigi	28 febbraio, dom.
Pasqua ebraica (1° e 2° giorno)	30-31 marzo, mar. - ven.
Giovedì Santo	1 aprile, giov.
Giovedì Santo (prima sera)	2 aprile, ven.
Venerdì Santo (prima sera)	2 aprile, ven.
Pasqua ebraica (3° e 4° giorno)	5-6 aprile, lun. - mar.
Settimana della Risurrezione	13 maggio, giov.
Shavuot (prima e seconda giornata)	19-20 maggio, mar. - giov.
Giornata dei Caduti*	31 maggio, lun.
Giorno dell'Indipendenza*	4 luglio, dom.
Giorno dell'Indipendenza (a osservanza)*	5 luglio, lun.
Festa dell'Assunzione	15 agosto, dom.
Festa del Lavoro*	5 settembre, lun.
Rosh Hashanah (primo giorno ebraico)	9-10 settembre, giov. - ven.
Idi-El (giorno del raccolto)	10-12 settembre, ven. - dom.
Yom Kippur (primo giorno ebraico)	18 settembre, sab.
Sukkot (prima e seconda giornata)	23-24 settembre, giov. - ven.
Shoana (Atzeveth, primo giorno di settembre)	30 settembre, giov.
Shoana Torah (Shoana della Torah)	1 ottobre, ven.
Giorno di Colombo	11 ottobre, lun.
Festa di Dignitanti	1 novembre, lun.
Giorno della Giustizia	2 novembre, mar.
Dinvali (Festa della Luce)	5 novembre, ven.
Giornata dei Velocisti	11 novembre, giov.
Idi-Atza (prima e seconda giornata)	16-18 novembre, mar. - giov.
Giorno del Ringraziamento*	25 novembre, giov.
Imamataa Concezione	8 dicembre, mar.
Vigilia di Natale (a osservanza)*	24 dicembre, ven.
Natale*	25 dicembre, sab.
Capodanno (a osservanza)*	31 dicembre, ven.

INFORMAZIONI

Le disposizioni sul parcheggio alternato possono essere soggette all'urto di un'auto a causa di un'azione provocata dalla neve, delle condizioni meteorologiche inusuali o di altre emergenze. Si prega di visitare il sito all'indirizzo www.nyc.gov/dot o di chiamare il numero 311 per ulteriori informazioni.

DTS per sordi o udollesi: chiamare il numero (212) 504-4115.

NE ERAVATE A CONOSCENZA?

Che cosa contiene un nome? Eravate a conoscenza della differenza di significato contenuta in questi segni per il parcheggio?

NON FERMARSI PER CORTESIA	NON FERMARSI PER CORTESIA	NON FERMARSI PER CORTESIA	
Posso fermarmi per far scendere o salire un passeggero?	No	SI	SI
Posso fermarmi per scaricare o caricare un pacco o della merce lungo il marciapiede?	No	No	SI
È consentito aspettare?	No	No	No

A tutta la città di New York è stata attribuita una zona per la rimozione forzata ai sensi della legge sui veicoli e sul traffico dello Stato risalente al 1959. Questo implica che tutti i veicoli parcheggiati o utilizzati illegalmente o con l'immatricolazione o la etichetta dell'ispezione mancanti o scadute saranno rimossi forzatamente.

Durante le PRINCIPALI FESTIVITÀ LEGALI, è permesso fermarsi, sostare e parcheggiare eccezionale nelle aree, dove le norme sul fermarsi, sostare e parcheggiare sono in vigore sette giorni alla settimana. Per esempio: "Non sostare mai". Di conseguenza, i parchimetri non funzioneranno durante le principali festività legali.

Il doppio parcheggio delle autostrade è illegale in qualsiasi momento, compreso il giorno per la pulizia dello strada indipendentemente dalla posizione, dallo scopo e dalla durata.

È illegale parcheggiare entro 15 piedi lungo entrambi i lati di un idranti antincendio. I marciapiedi colorati presso un idranti antincendio NON INDICANO dove è autorizzato parcheggiare.

Un veicolo occupato e parcheggiato illegalmente provoca gli stessi pericoli per la sicurezza di la conduzione di un veicolo non occupato. Siate responsabili e parcheggiate legalmente.

*Le principali festività legali

NYC
DOT
311

EIS Training Curriculum

- Brief history of purpose and implementation of EIS
- Overview and Features of the EIS portal
- Review and Analysis of Reports available in the system
- Using EIS reports and data as a tool to monitor and improve performance and customer service
- Contacting the EIS Help Desk for questions and/or troubleshooting
- Future Enhancements to EIS (.i.e. mapping capabilities)

NYCHA's Research and Management Analysis Department Assists Departments to Better Understand Their Performance

The New York City Housing Authority's Research and Management Analysis Department is in the process of training 330 Management Department staff including Public Housing Managers, Superintendents, and Administrators in the use of the Executive Information System (EIS).

EIS, implemented in 2006, is a data warehouse and reporting system that allows users to quickly identify and investigate problem and opportunity areas. The system also supports decision-making and the deployment of scarce resources. EIS provides

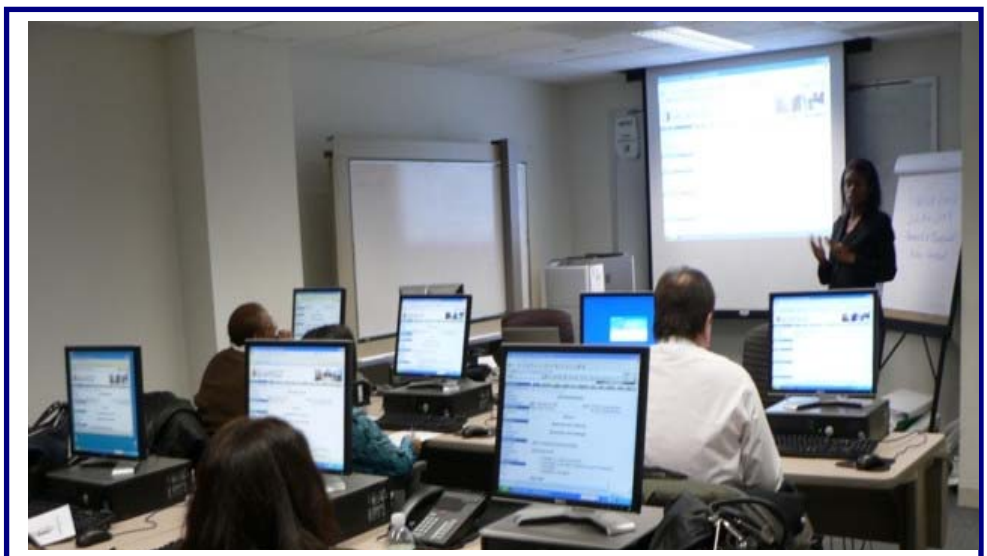
users with flexibility to view point-in-time and trend data, as well as the ability to "slice and dice" data along organizational and other management lines.

Management Department staff can use this tool to monitor the performance of their developments on various indicators such as rent collection, service requests for maintenance and skilled trades work, heat and hot water service, elevator outages, average time to prepare apartments for rental, and average time to re-occupy vacant units.

Through a better understanding of their performance, EIS can help Public Housing Managers take corrective action as appropriate, and ultimately improve service delivery to NYCHA residents.

The training sessions began on November 16, 2009 and will end on December 28, 2009.

For more information contact Anne-Marie Flatley, Research and Management Analysis Department, Director at anne-marie.flatley@nycha.nyc.gov or at 212-306-8202.



Research and Management Analysis Department Deputy Director Sybille Louis giving an overview of the EIS portal and describing its features and capabilities to a group of NYCHA development Managers

Serving Our Customers: DOT goes on a “Wild Duck Chase”!

DOT Customer Service heard from a Queens’ resident who asked for DOT’s help in retrieving a sentimental vintage toy which was dangling precariously from a utility wire hanging over the street. The colorful wooden duck, a child’s pull toy, had accidentally been left on the caller’s lawn and was thrown up onto the overhead utility wires, where it became entangled. This situation, nevertheless, posed a serious hazard because it was made of solid wood, about 8” by 10” in size, and if it were to fall, it could have caused great harm to vehicles or pedestrians below.

Ever thinking “safety

first,” DOT’s Queens Streetlight Division answered the work order called in by 311 and rushed one of its contractors to the location to remove the duck. But this was only half of the story.

Our customer had left her contact information with 311 and requested the return of her property, yet the duck remained “missing in action”, and the whereabouts of the duck were unknown for several weeks while the customer was distraught over the loss of this sentimental toy.

Customer Service double-checked the records and found that the work order

indicated that the duck had indeed been located and removed from the wire. Now it was Customer Service’s job to find the duck and reconnect it with its rightful owner. After a few inquiries, Customer Service found the duck’s “hiding place” -- in the streetlight contractor’s lost and found area -- and arranged for the owner to pick up the sentimental duck at the contractor’s offices.

Receiving a “thank you” e-mail from the grateful owners with a photo of the happy ducky made our day, showing just how worthwhile and rewarding “going the extra mile” can be!



Toy Duck Recovered by DOT for Its Owners

SBS Customer Service Center Director Receives Prestigious 100 Year Association’s Liberman Public Service Award

On Wednesday December 16, 2009 the [100 Year Association](#) honored Evette Robinson with the prestigious Isaac Liberman Public Service Award. Evette is Director of the SBS Customer Service Center in the NYC Business Express Unit.

The annual award was presented to Evette for her dedication to teaching and learning, her active role as a trainer and mentor to newer employees, and her hard work and

contribution not only to SBS, but also to the City. Evette received a \$2,000 award from the Brooklyn Bar Association.

This is the eighth consecutive year an SBS employee is being recognized for outstanding public service. The previous winners are Narda Amarilla-Fernandez (2008), Brenda Snider (2007), Eddy Eng (2006), Haleena Nalevanko (2005), Charles Houston (2004), Lynn Roberts (2003), and Bernadette Nation (2002).



Evette Robinson and SBS Commissioner Rob Walsh at the 100 Year Association Ceremony

Customer Service Group Mayor's Office of Operations

253 Broadway
10th floor
New York, NY 10013

Email:
customerservice@cityhall.nyc.gov

www.nyc.gov

Elizabeth Weinstein
Director
Customer Service Group

Jeff Kay
Director
Mayor's Office of Operations

About the Customer Service Group

The Customer Service Group (CSG) was established by Mayor Bloomberg's Executive Order 115 to support and implement the mandates of the order. CSG is part of the Mayor's Office of Operations.

"Great Service, Great City" Roll Out Update

The "Great Service, Great City" Training Program launched Citywide in August of this year with fully booked classrooms. A number of agencies took the training program "in-house" and have launched the program or expect to do so early in

the coming year. Over 20,000 employees are scheduled for training and over 20 agencies are participating. For agencies wishing to send trainers to a final Train-the-Trainer course at the Citywide Training Center, free of cost, a final session is

available January 5, 2010. Please contact customerservice@cityhall.nyc.gov for details.

311 Music Video Receives National Recognition

"We've Got The Answer" a music video created and produced by 311 employees was recently named 2nd Place Winner by ICMI, the international association of call centers, at their annual ACCE Conference in Las Vegas, NV. The NYC 311 submission was selected by a panel of industry experts from hundreds of other private sector and government entities for

demonstrating "how your contact center is improving the power of customer experience". The 311 Video highlights the positive experience NYC customers receive when using 311 via the phone, online, through social media, or iPhone app.

The video was created, produced, filmed and edited by 311 employee volunteers. To check

out the award-winning video and perhaps see some familiar faces, visit the ACCE Conference site at: http://www.icmi.com/acc_e2009/VideoContest or on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ACCEConference>

DOHMH Office of Vital Records: Improving the Customer Experience

The Health Department's Office of Vital Records efforts to improve the customer experience at its birth and death certificate walk-in service center are paying off.

In October, the office conducted a NYC Feedback survey at 125 Worth Street, with 250 visitors completing cards. Ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents rated their overall customer experience "Excellent" or "Good." Similar high marks were received for clarity of information, office cleanliness and professionalism.

The improvements the Office of Vital Records has brought to its customers include: 1) increased staffing at windows to help reduce wait times; 2) greeting customers as they walk in and asking about their issues right away; and 3) working with the Health Department Police to greet and assist customers

For more information contact Kevin Koshar at kkoshar@health.nyc.gov or Theresa Yasin at tyasin@health.nyc.gov

To order NYC Feedback Comment Cards for your center contact Francisco Navarro at fnavarro@cityhall.nyc.gov

Vital Records Survey Results

Clarity of Information
Excellent or Good: 92%

Cleanliness
Excellent or Good: 86%

Professionalism and Courtesy
Excellent or Good: 92%

Convenience
Excellent or Good: 88%

Overall Customer Service
Excellent or Good: 93%



**DOHMH Vital Records
Greeter Maria Machado**