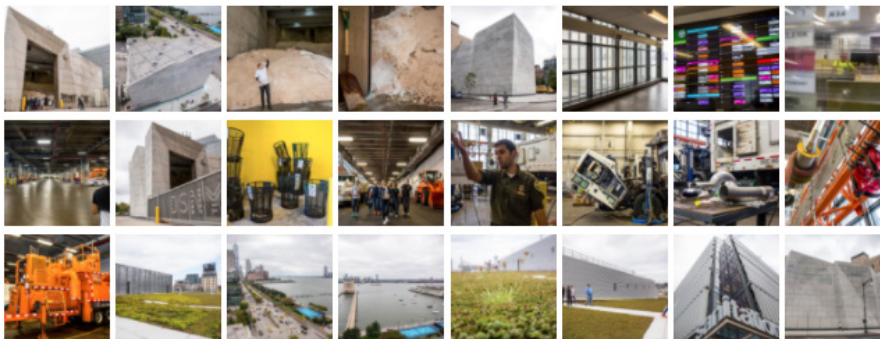


INSIDE THE DSNY'S OFF-LIMITS FUTURISTIC 'SMART' GARAGE & SALT SHED

OCTOBER 18, 2017 by: Scott Lynch



(Photo by Scott Lynch/Gothamist)

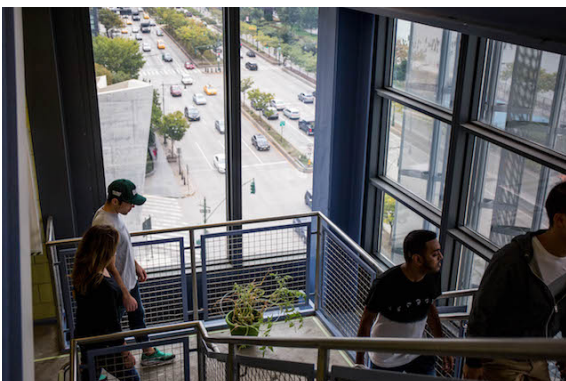


The [Spring Street Salt Shed](#) and the DSNY Manhattan 1/2/5 Garages have only been open for about two years, but the strikingly-designed buildings have quickly become Tribeca landmarks overlooking West Street and the Hudson River Greenway. As part of the 15th annual [Open House New York](#) weekend this month, I had the opportunity to tour both facilities, led by both DSNY personnel and representatives of [Dattner Architects](#) and WXY Architecture + Urban Design. Here are just a few things I learned about what went into the design of, and what goes on within, these incredible structures.



(Photo by Scott Lynch/Gothamist)

- The 1/2/5 Garages is where the Department of Sanitation stores, cleans, repairs, and maintains all of its 150 vehicles for Manhattan’s 1st, 2nd, and 5th Districts, which basically runs up the west side to Central Park. The facility’s trucks service residential buildings only, but that amounts to about 300,000 households, or a population greater than, for example, the entire city of Cleveland, Orlando, or Pittsburgh.
- Every DSNY truck gets “scrubbed spotless” at least once a month in a huge cleaning bay.
- The Garages are certified LEED Gold, thanks to, among other nifty features, the 2,600 sunshades that blanket the structure, and move automatically throughout the day tracking the sun across the sky. They stay open enough to let natural light in, but blocking the direct rays that cause overheating (and higher air conditioning bills).
- There’s also an amazing 50,000 square foot green roof at the 1/2/5 Garages, a vast carpet of lichen-looking plants which not only functions as insulation, but absorbs rainwater. And any water the vegetation can’t handle, the building collects and reuses for washing trucks and flushing toilets.
- To encourage DSNY workers to walk up or down a flight or three rather than taking the elevator, the building has an “active design staircase” with pretty views of the Hudson River, the New Jersey skyline, and down to 1WTC.
- The angular Salt Shed, meanwhile, looks really cool, but there’s also a function to the form. It’s tapered at the base, for example, which gives more sidewalk space to pedestrians. And the notched interior allows the salt to naturally fall into a “slanting position,” making it more efficient to load onto the trucks.
- The Salt Shed holds 5,000 tons of the snow-melting stuff, and this year all of it, both here and citywide, has been shipped from Chile, who won the annual bidding for the NYC contract.
- Those evenly spaced holes that run over the entire exterior aren’t just a design flourish; they’re designed to trick your eye into seeing a uniform surface, rather than the mess of different colors and shades that can’t be helped when you’re building with so much concrete.



(Photo by Scott Lynch/Gothamist)