

OPEN CHANNEL NEWS

MCES Industrial Waste & Pollution Prevention

Issue # 17 /August 2004

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) is one of three divisions of the Metropolitan Council, a regional public agency working for the seven-county metropolitan area.

MCES provides water resources management services to ensure that:

- (1) sufficient sewer capacity exists to serve planned development, and sufficient capital investments are made to preserve the region's water quality;
- (2) wastewater collection and treatment services are provided in a cost- and quality-competitive manner for 103 communities and more than 800 industrial clients; and
- (3) local plans provide for adequate water supply and nonpoint source pollution prevention in the region.

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A Salute to All April 2004 Reporters!

We want to thank all permittees who were required to send in quarterly reports this past April. For the first time in the history of the industrial waste pretreatment program, all reports submitted were on time!

We required 179 of the current total of 815 permittees to submit reports in April.

Overall, the past several years have shown a steady decline in late reporting. We issued 145 Notices of Violation (NOVs) for late reporting in the year 2000, 125 were issued in 2001, 105 in 2002, and only 89 last year. The decline in NOVs issued for late reporting is partially due to IWPP engineers communicating with permittees and reminding them to submit their reports, but mostly it is the result of conscientious efforts of the vast majority of our permittees to follow their permit requirements and submit their reports on time.



Leo Hermes, manager of IWPP, salutes permittees for on-time reporting

We Waited and Waited, and Finally the Rain Came...



Bevens Creek in April 2004 during a dry spring



Bevens Creek in June 2004 after the rain came

But it wasn't in time to boost our flows enough to avoid a revenue shortfall for 2004. The picture from June (above right) shows the effect of the rainy spring period, in contrast to the picture (above left) that was published in the April issue of *Open Channel News*. See the article inside that describes a new cost allocation method that will prevent future shortfalls.

Important Dates:

October 15, 2004 – Liquid Waste Hauler reports due at MCES offices for permittees on quarterly reporting.
October 30, 2004 - All Regular & Special Discharge quarterly reports due at MCES offices.



Pictured above is the Chanhassen liquid waste hauler disposal site. This site will need to be upgraded according to the proposed plan requirements.

System Wide Septage Management Study Moves Forward

The study related to the MCES Septage Management Program was completed during July. As described in the last issue of *Open Channel News*, the purpose of the study is to evaluate current practices for accepting hauled waste into MCES facilities and to develop a future plan for MCES acceptance of septage and other hauled waste.

MCES management has indicated that the future plan should consider disposal sites located only at MCES wastewater treatment plants unless provisions are made for adequate dilution to minimize sedimentation, odor, and corrosion. The study report examined several alternative strategies for future disposal sites. Hauler drive times associated with each alternative, as well as hauler cost/revenue factors and associated homeowner costs were determined. The recommended plan for future disposal sites includes three treatment plant sites, (the Metropolitan, Empire and Blue Lake Plants), an upgraded Chanhassen site, and one or possibly two interceptor sites to serve the northern metro area (if acceptable locations can be found). All future disposal sites will have upgraded security and access features, a means for sampling and determining load volumes (most likely with truck scales), and detention tanks (if needed) to control the discharge rate. Under this plan, numerous existing sites will be closed, although the time frame extends out until 2009 in some cases. Estimated capital costs related to disposal site construction and upgrades may be up to \$4.6 million, not including land purchases (if needed).

The final report for this study has been discussed with MCES management, and will be presented to the Environment Committee of the Metropolitan Council during September. Then, a public meeting will be held to present the study findings and plan, and obtain comments from interested parties. After that, the report and plan will be considered by the Metropolitan Council for adoption and implementation. See the following article regarding changes to the load charge for hauled waste that have already been adopted by the Metropolitan Council.

Full Cost Load Charge and Facilities Fee Adopted on August 11

The Metropolitan Council has adopted a modified method for calculating load charges for hauled waste discharged into MCES facilities by liquid waste haulers. Effective Jan. 1, 2005, the strength component of load charges will recover the full cost of treating hauled waste, so that these MCES customers are charged in proportion to the cost of service received. Debt service for new facilities and interceptor operating costs - both of which had been excluded from load charge calculations - will be included, and the flow equivalence factor will be eliminated from the load charge rate calculation. These changes were discussed at a public meeting on June 22, and also presented to the Environment Committee of the Metropolitan Council on July 27. Another policy was also approved on Aug. 11 in conjunction with the load charge changes. This is the addition of a "special facilities" component to load charges to pay for new or modified disposal sites. (See the article at left.)

With these changes, some load charges will increase significantly. For example, the standard load charge for septage, currently at \$16.21 per 1,000 gallons, will increase to \$32.30 per 1,000 gallons in 2005. The rate for holding tanks, however, is affected only by the special facilities fee that will be added after disposal sites are constructed or modified (not anticipated for 2005). Note that out-of-region loads discharged into MCES facilities have been charged "full cost" rates since 2002, and therefore will not be affected by this change. All 2005 MCES rates are discussed on the last page of this issue of *Open Channel News*, and all liquid waste haulers will receive written notice of the 2005 load charge rates later this year. If questions arise, please contact the MCES engineer assigned to your permit.

New Method for Establishing the Municipal Wastewater Rate

The drought experienced in the last half of 2003 and early 2004 reduced MCES's anticipated 2004 revenues, and prompted us to develop a new method to set our municipal wastewater rate. The goal was to ensure that adequate revenue is generated to maintain operations and avoid the use of reserve account funds.

Rather than basing the rate on estimated flow volumes (which can fluctuate significantly), we will now use a "firm flow" cost allocation method. With this method, the actual wastewater flow from each community, for the most recent 12-month period, is used along a defined revenue requirement to set the annual rate.

This new method was discussed with communities earlier this year, and was then adopted by the Metropolitan Council on Aug. 11.

Nonylphenols – A New Buzz Word From EPA

In January this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gave Notice of Availability of a Draft Aquatic Life Criteria Document for Nonylphenol along with a request for scientific views.

What is Nonylphenol?

Nonylphenol (NP) is an organic chemical produced in large quantities in the United States. It is used as an intermediate chemical to produce Nonylphenol Ethoxylate (NPE) and Akyphenol Ethoxylate (APE) surfactants. These surfactants are widely used in industrial and domestic cleaning products and in industrial processes such as the production of pulp and paper, textiles, leather, paints and coatings, and metals.

Why is Nonylphenol a concern?

APEs and NPEs are water soluble and will biodegrade in biological wastewater treatment plants. Final effluents discharging to surface waters typically contain measurable amounts of the biodegradation intermediates, with NP being of most concern. NP is moderately soluble and somewhat resistant to natural degradation in water. In certain concentrations NP has been shown to cause endocrine disruptions in some aquatic species. Because of NP's chemical properties and widespread use as a chemical intermediate, concerns have been raised over the potential risks posed by exposure of aquatic organisms to it. For these reasons, EPA has developed draft ambient water quality criteria (WQC) for nonylphenol.

What does this mean to treatment plants and industry?

Once final, the WQC become guidance for states and tribes as they establish their water quality standard regulations. State and tribal decision makers have discretion to adopt approaches that differ from EPA's guidance on a case-by-case basis. If adopted, the WQC may form the basis for state water quality standards and become enforceable through NPDES permits or other environmental programs. MCES will keep you informed of developments pertaining to this Draft Aquatic Life Criteria Document and will provide guidance for reducing APE's and NPE's from your wastewater discharge.



Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant effluent channel



Tap into 600 years of experience with the Minnesota Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program

Article provided by Minnesota RETAP

Since 2001, the Minnesota Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program (Minnesota RETAP) has conducted environmental assessments for Minnesota commercial service businesses and institutions to help prevent pollution, reduce waste, improve energy efficiency—and make them more competitive.

Minnesota RETAP draws on the skills of approximately 20 retired and semi-retired engineers, scientists, and managers who have experience in numerous industrial/commercial processes with a variety of waste streams and energy issues. Together, these retired engineers and scientists have almost 600 years of on-the-job technical expertise and know-how.

Minnesota RETAP provides free, voluntary, and non-regulatory on-site waste reduction and energy use assessments. Their assessments identify opportunities for source reduction, reuse, recycling, and energy efficiency. Past recipients report significant reductions in waste as well as cost savings after implementing Minnesota RETAP's suggestions.

While businesses and institutions of all types are eligible for RETAP assistance, Minnesota RETAP focuses on helping small and medium-sized commercial/service businesses and private and public institutions. RETAP's services complement those of other Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) activities such as the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) that focuses its assistance on different business sectors.

Support for Minnesota RETAP is provided by the OEA, a non-regulatory state agency that provides waste reduction and pollution prevention assistance to Minnesotans. Minnesota RETAP is housed with MnTAP and based at the University of Minnesota.

For more information about Minnesota RETAP, visit the OEA Web site at: www.moea.state.mn.us/p2/RETAP.cfm. Or call 612-624-1300 or 800-247-0015, and ask to speak to a retired engineer.

Open Channel News

is published by
MCES,
Industrial Waste &
Pollution Prevention Section
230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1626

Leo H. Hermes
Industrial Waste &
Pollution Prevention Section
Manager

For further information on
Open Channel News
Contact:
Maggie Lundell / 651-602-4769

For general information on
the Industrial Waste &
Pollution Prevention Section contact:
Pat Fonseth / 651-602-4703

**Open Channel News
can be found online at:**
www.metrocouncil.org/environment/IndustrialWaste/news_OCNI_index.htm

2005 Rates and Fees

The Metropolitan Council on Aug. 11 approved the following rates affecting industrial users for 2005:

The Municipal Wastewater Charge for communities within the Metropolitan Council's region will be \$1.47 per 1,000 gallons.

Strength Charge Rates for wastewater generated within the Council's region will be \$0.129 per excess pound of total suspended solids (TSS), and \$0.0645 per excess pound of chemical oxygen demand (COD).

Full cost recovery rates for treatment of wastewater generated outside of the Council's region will be \$0.255 per excess pound of TSS and \$0.1275 per excess pound of COD.

Liquid waste haulers' standard load charges will be \$32.30 per 1,000 gallons. Holding tank wastes will be charged \$1.47 per 1,000 gallons. Collar county load charges will be \$42.30 per 1,000 gallons. The Portable Toilet Waste rate will be \$42.94 per 1,000 gallons. (See related article in this issue of *Open Channel News*.)

SAC and the associated Add-on-Service Charge rates for 2005 will be addressed by the Council this fall and be presented in a future issue of *Open Channel News*.

For all permittees, permit fees will range from \$425 to \$4,025 depending on permit status.

For more information regarding rates and fees, please contact your MCES engineer or visit: www.metrocouncil.org/environment/IndustrialWaste/news_rates.htm The 2005 rates will be posted on this site following end-of-year billing in February 2005.