

# MCES LIQUID WASTE HAULER CUSTOMER WORKSHOP

April 6, 2022 – Comments, Questions, and Answers Summary



## Comments, Questions, and Answers Summary

### Topic: MCES Budget and Rates

#### Question 1: What were the impacts of COVID on MCES finances?

##### Answer:

- The short answer is next to none – minimal impact.
- In March 2020 when we created the budget for 2021, there were dire predictions that cities would go bankrupt and there would be no sales tax and terrible things would happen. So we built a 2% rate increase to be sensitive that it might be difficult times for our customers. None of the cities have missed a payment and our industrial revenues did not decline. There were some expenses for masks, hand sanitizer, plexi glass, testing kits, etc. We are in the process of submitting to FEMA for our expenses for that.
  - This is what's partially driving our 6% increase for 2023 because we need to get some of that money back when we only increased 2% when we really needed 4%.
- Another expense is our wastewater testing program where we were testing our influent to look for COVID in the wastewater. It turned out to be incredibly accurate as well as fortune telling approach. Whether people were getting tested or not, we could see it in the wastewater. We've been using that as a tool and we've partnered with the University of MN center for genomics and MN Department of Health (whom might be working with the CDC). This work will be funded through ARP (American Rescue/Relief Plan) which was approved by Governor Walz so we can continue to test our influent.
- Another issue that increased our labor costs was due to no one took vacation in 2021. We'll get that back eventually as people start taking their vacation.

### Topic: Permit Overview and New Low-Volume Permit

#### Question 2: Is it possible for a hauler to get on a low-volume permit if we haven't already been contacted?

##### Answer:

- If you think you might be falling into this category of discharging less than 50,000 gallons per year and haven't been notified, I suggest that you contact your permit engineer. We will then review our records and let you know if you are eligible. It's possible that we may have missed somebody.

##### Comment:

- A copy of your permit can be accessed at any time through our Industrial Online Reporting System. There will be a PDF icon to click and download the permit. It's on your dashboard in the Permits and License table under your current upcoming submittal obligations.

### Topic: Fridley Liquid Waste Receiving Site Overview

#### Question 3: Where does the waste go after it is treated through the Lakeside unit?

**Answer:** As mentioned, the debris and grit go through augers and into those dumpsters. The liquid waste keeps moving through the system and is reentered into our gravity interceptor system behind the facility.

## Topic: Disposal Sites and Updates

**Question 4: Please discuss current limitations – Would MCES consider loosening waste type restrictions and/or opening it up to new waste types at Fridley and Blue Lake disposal sites? In future, is it possible that other locations besides Metro will accept grease waste (from restaurants)?**

**Answers:**

- We have carefully limited the waste that we accept at Blue Lake based on the equipment that we have. In the last year or so we prohibited the discharge of restaurant grease trap waste at Blue Lake and that was mainly in regard to the new bar screens. They have a much smaller diameter and so this was going to be problematic. We even had issues prior to that related to restaurant grease. We got a large load of restaurant grease waste and we got grease on our primaries which then had to be manually removed. The Plant just isn't set up for that type of waste. We don't foresee going back to that until there's some kind of change in that regard.
- Eventually it would be nice to be able to put that restaurant grease trap waste directly into our bioreactors at the Blue Lake plant but that will take capital improvements.
- We also have a big issue with handling grease at the treatment plants and grease problems within our system. The big thing with allowing it into some of our other treatment plants, it's just another waste that we have to try to figure out how to remove. It's floating on the surface, has to be skimmed off and hauled away. We end up hauling it back to our Metro plant to process it. So that's another reason we don't accept it at these other sites too.
- With regard to other changes, we have slowly allowed some deviations at certain sites. Bob mentioned that we receive some leachate at the Fridley and Blue Lake disposal sites. This is on a case by case basis and we do a lot of work up front to be sure those waste types aren't going to create problems for our treatment plants.
- This has helped in alleviating extra transportation to the Metro plant. So we have opened our disposal sites up to different waste types when we can. We continue to look at that in the future as we have changes.

**Question 5: With my permit, can I dump at ANY of your facilities? Also, are you opening the Rogers location or anywhere near there that's closer?**

**Answer:**

- Once you have a permit with us you can haul to any of our disposal sites, limited to the acceptable waste types at each site. The access card that you have will also work at the Blue Lake and Fridley sites.
- Rogers plant – we asked when we took it over. That plant is just too small and the solids handling is also an issue at this plant. There are future plans for when the Rogers plant gets outdated, they will plan to build a Crow Wing treatment plant out that way. We've asked to get something designed into this plant.

## Topic: Wrap Up

**Comment in chat:**

- Before you go, please take less than 5 minutes to complete our short survey: <https://forms.office.com/g/zxBiP2ymaP>
- Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments you may have: [iwpp@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:iwpp@metc.state.mn.us) or 651-602-4703
- If interested in watching our recording or passing it along to others, [here is a link to the recorded LWH Customer Workshop.](#)