

# MCES MICROBREWERY CUSTOMER WORKSHOP

January 17, 2023 – Comments, Questions, and Answers Summary



## Comments, Questions, and Answers Summary

### Topic: MCES Fees and Charges

#### Question 1: What inflationary pressures did MCES experience in 2022?

**Answer:** Ned Smith, MCES Pretreatment & Finance Director

- Our inflationary pressures were significant in 2022. We had to go back and do a budget amendment to change our budget to ask for the permission to spend more money. There were several key components.
  - Our materials and supplies are everything from nuts, bolts, belts and pumps. Those went up by 24% in 2022. Some of that is due to increased volume, but most of it was due to increased prices for our materials.
  - Natural gas was up around two times, double the price of our natural gas and our usage doubled.
  - Our electricity went up 15 to 20% over 2021. That also was a combination of increased usage due to some capital programs as well as price increases from Xcel.
  - Certain chemicals went up over 20%. There's a lot of our chemicals have very limited suppliers. There's only about two or three. It's very competitive for us to even get those chemicals.
- So, all of those items did go up in price. We plan for that, and we do have a reserve to help us get through those additional expenses. So, we are solvent.

**Comment:** Ned Smith, MCES Pretreatment & Finance Director

- I think we're going to see some inflationary pressures in our 2024 budget as well.

### Topic: MCES Fees and Charges

#### Question 2: My microbrewery is in arrears in paying its outstanding invoices. Is there any relief?

**Answer:** Ned Smith, MCES Pretreatment & Finance Director

- Minnesota Legislature passed a bill last year to offer help to breweries for paying permitting and strength charge costs but that has expired and the money used up. So, from a state perspective we don't have any relief available.
- I would encourage you to talk to your permit engineer and we can come up with some creative solutions to make sure that we get the money that we need to run our plants, but that it's in a way that helps you continue your business. It's very important for us that we have a robust microbrewery scene here in the Twin Cities region. So, talk to your permit engineer and we'll see if we can come up with some payment plans.

### Topic: Permit Criteria

#### Question 3: How much time does MCES give for microbreweries to achieve task requirements? Discuss task requirement as well.

**Answer:** Nanette Geroux, IWPP Permit Engineer

- An example would be if you needed to install a holding tank or install a pH adjust system. It's going to be a little bit more time consuming. If you have a task that needs to be done, typically we try to work with your situation as individual brewers. The general timeframe is usually 60 to 90 days to get it resolved and in compliance.

**Comment:** Nanette Geroux, IWPP Permit Engineer

- Part of it is just communicating with your permit engineer and telling them the circumstances. MCES is willing to work with your circumstances and help.

## Topic: Water Balance, Deductions, TTBs

### Question 4: Do I need to have a city approved meter?

**Answers:** Laura Engen, IWPP Permit Engineer

- No, you don't have to have a city approved meter. If your facility is in a business center or you are in a multi-tenant building, you will need to have your own process meter for the microbrewery. But I don't believe that must be a city approved meter. It's okay to check with your local city on that as well.

## Topic: Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP)

### Question 5: What does it mean by Concentrate Waste under the recommendation heading on the August Schell Brewing case study slide?

**Answers:** Jon Schroeder, MnTAP Waste Specialist

- I'm not sure as this project is several years old and I wasn't personally on it. We have a Solutions publication that's listed on our website that lists summer program highlights for that year. August Schell would be highlighted in 2011 Solutions.

**Comment:** Jon Schroeder, MnTAP Waste Specialist

- MnTAP Solutions publication: [MnTAP – Solutions \(umn.edu\)](http://www.mn.gov/mnTAP/Solutions)

### Question 6: Could you give us a little more information on the Antea survey? What was in the survey?

**Answers:** Jon Schroeder, MnTAP Waste Specialist

- We received grant funding to go into breweries and do sustainability work. It was like an umbrella grant that allowed MnTAP to specifically approach breweries in the state of Minnesota and solicit input in terms of various questions they had. Those three key areas were: water, electricity, and natural gas. We notified breweries that we received this funding, and we would like to help get some understanding from breweries as to how you're doing in these areas.

**Comment:** Tina Nelson, IWPP Manager

- We have passed along grant funding to MnTAP and MnTAP has successfully partnered with over 30 industries in the past ten years to complete water projects just in the Twin Cities area. Those projects have resulted in a cumulative savings of over 325 million gallons. I strongly encourage you all to connect with MnTAP to see how they can help you.

## 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/6cGmFkbeGT>

## Resources

- **MCES Industrial Waste Microbrewery Program webpage:** [Microbrewery - Metropolitan Council \(metrocouncil.org\)](http://www.metrocouncil.org/microbrewery)
- **Annual report instruction sheet:** [How to submit your microbrewery annual report.](#)
- **MCES Industrial Waste & Pollution Prevention contacts:**
  - [MCES Engineer](#)
  - **IWPP general** - [iwpp@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:iwpp@metc.state.mn.us), or 651-602-4703
- [MCES Customer Workshop webpage](#) – for workshop calendar, recordings, and summaries
- [Brewer's Guild](#)
- [MnTAP microbrewery program](#)