

OPEN CHANNEL NEWS

News bulletin from Metropolitan Council Environmental Services



April 2024 - Issue #63

Environmental Services is one of three primary organizational divisions of the Metropolitan Council, a regional public agency working for the seven-county metropolitan area. Our mission is to partner, plan, and provide services to protect our region's water. This includes wastewater services and integrated planning to ensure sustainable water quality and water supply for the region.

The Industrial Waste & Pollution Prevention (IWPP) Section of the Met Council regulates and monitors more than 900 industrial customers discharging to the sanitary sewer systems. Our goal is to ensure compliance with local and federal regulations and reduce the amount of pollution entering the wastewater collection system. The IWPP Section also responds to sewer-related spills and community sewer problems. These functions protect Met Council and community wastewater collection and treatment facilities, process efficiency, operating personnel, and the environment.



Open Channel News is celebrating 25 years!

In this issue

- PFAS Management Plan to be finalized by June 30
- 2024 Industrial Customer Workshops
- Finance charges reinstated
- Tour the Metro Plant virtually
- New spill reporting poster
- FOG and rags toolkit and outreach materials now available
- Meet our newly hired technicians
- 2024 Industrial user rates and fees
- Let's stay connected!

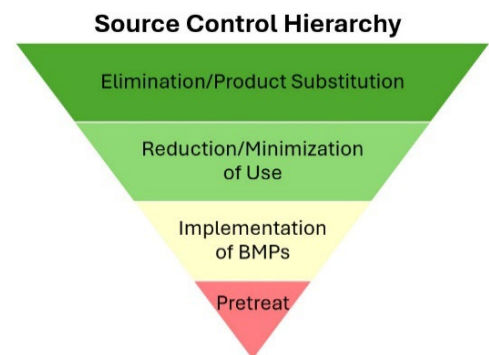
PFAS Management Plan to be finalized by June 30

The Environmental Services division of the Metropolitan Council will be finalizing a pollutant management plan for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) by June 30. This plan is part of a continued partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to identify and reduce PFAS in the environment.

PFAS are a class of over 9,000 man-made chemicals that have been used in industrial and consumer products for over 70 years. They repel oil, water, and heat and form a strong carbon-fluorine bond that doesn't break down in the environment. Because of this they are nicknamed "forever chemicals" and are very difficult and costly to remove from wastewater through treatment. This is why we are focusing our efforts on elimination and reduction at the source rather than end-treatment at our plants.

The goals of the PFAS Management Plan are to:

- Identify sources of PFAS coming into our treatment plants
- Prioritize reduction efforts on higher loading industrial sources and work our way down
- Help industry identify intentional and unintentional PFAS in their wastewater discharge
- Encourage product substitutions and elimination
- Minimize the need for extensive pretreatment systems



PFAS work will begin this spring in the Blue Lake treatment plant service area

Met Council is participating in MPCA's PFAS Wastewater Monitoring Plan for five of our nine wastewater treatment plants: Blue Lake, East Bethel, Hastings, Rogers, and Seneca. Based on two rounds of influent sampling conducted by MPCA at these five plants, Blue Lake has been designated as a high priority response plant. Our efforts will first focus in the Blue Lake service area and will begin this spring with PFAS sampling at

- the plant's main interceptor sewer lines,
- residential only local sewer lines within the plant's service area, and
- industries discharging to the plant that are identified as having potential for PFAS in their wastewater discharge.

Continued with Industry types identified as having potential to discharge PFAS...

Important Dates:

- April 30, 2024 – All Standard and Special quarterly reports due [online](#)
- May 2, 2024 – Industrial Customer Workshop In-person
- May 9, 2024 – Industrial Customer Workshop Virtual

Industry types identified as having potential to discharge PFAS

- Chemical Manufacturers
- Commercial Laundries
- Electroplaters and Metal Finishers
- Landfills
- Medical Devices and Diagnostics
- Paper and Printed Products
- Personal Care Products
- Plastics Molding and Forming
- Roofing and Paving Products
- Semi-Conductor Manufacturers
- Water Supply Treatment

We will continue our efforts in the Blue Lake service area until June 30, 2025, and then will move on to the other four plants - East Bethel, Hastings, Rogers, and Seneca - which were all designated as a medium response priority.

2024 Industrial Customer Workshops

We are excited to offer two industrial customer workshops again this year - one in-person and one virtual – so that you can choose which works best for you.

These workshops are provided to share the Met Council’s budget and preliminary rates process, pretreatment program news and updates, and hear from you on matters that concern your business. The 2025 preliminary industrial user rates and fees will be presented at these workshops. Also, this year you will learn about the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program’s services and its work to reduce per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) as well as updates on our fats, oils, grease, and rags program.

- In-person: Thursday, May 2, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. (455 Etna St, Suite 32, Saint Paul MN 55106)
Doors open at 9:00 a.m. and staff will be available before and after the workshop to answer questions
- Virtual: Thursday, May 9, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. (Teams video conference)



All customers holding a Met Council permit are invited to join in the workshops. Watch your email inbox for an invitation to register from METC@public.govdelivery.com. We look forward to your participation and hearing from you.

Finance charges reinstated

As of January 1, 2024, Metropolitan Council Environmental Services has reinstated finance charges for all invoices not paid within 30 days of issuance. Finance charges had been temporarily paused until this year due to financial hardships experienced by many industries during the pandemic.

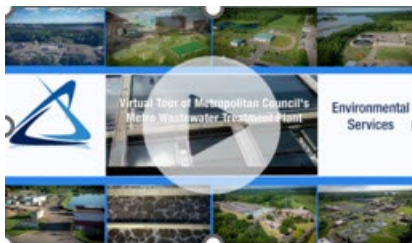
Finance Charges

- If payment isn’t received by the due date on the invoice, finance charges will accrue until the date payment is received
- When late payment is received on an invoice, the payment will first be applied to outstanding finance charges before being applied to the original invoice amount

Invoices

- Invoices are emailed only once to the billing contact
- If payment isn’t received by the due date on the invoice, a monthly statement containing the outstanding invoice amount and accrued finance charges will be emailed to the billing contact on the 1st of the month until payment is made in full

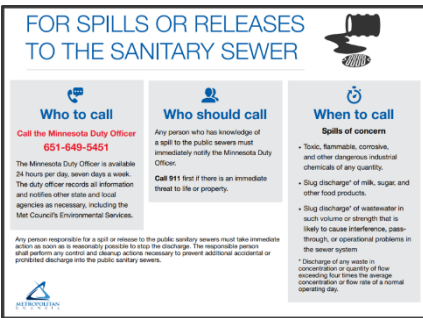
Invoices and monthly statements are emailed, not mailed, from e-billing@metc.state.mn.us. Please ensure that this email address is not blocked by your system or sent to your junk/spam folder. Also, update your billing contact information by contacting our office at jwpp@metc.state.mn.us or when completing your online submittals. Use this short help sheet to make contact changes during your online submittal: [Updating Facility Contacts in Your Next Online Submittal \(PDF\)](#)



Tour the Metro Plant virtually

We are happy to offer a new video that highlights the history and processes behind resource recovery at the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant before clean water is returned to the Mississippi River. Watch the video and learn the essential, and largely hidden, work Metropolitan Council does for the region every day.

[Virtual Tour of Metropolitan Council's Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant \(youtube.com\)](#)



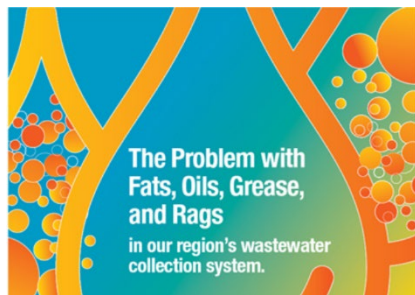
New spill reporting poster

The spill reporting procedures are the same, but we have updated our poster to provide clearer instructions on what to do when a spill or accidental discharge to the sanitary sewer occurs.

[Spill reporting poster \(PDF\)](#)

All industries holding a Met Council Industrial Discharge Permit are required to post a spill reporting poster like this one in an area visible to employees.

In addition to immediately contacting the Duty Officer, a report that describes the spill must be submitted to the Met Council within five calendar days after occurrence of the discharge. Visit our [Spill Reporting webpage](#) for more information.



FOG and rags toolkit and outreach materials now available

We now have a dedicated website with educational and outreach materials that provide guidance for keeping fats, oils, grease (FOG) and rags out of the sanitary sewers.

[Fats, Oils, Grease, and Rags - Metropolitan Council](#)

Toolkit materials on the website include:

- Best management practices in the kitchen for keeping FOG out of the drain
- A three-minute video on how to keep FOG out of the drain when cooking
- Information on how to operate and maintain grease traps and interceptors
- A list of who to call for grease interceptor services
- Information for businesses, communities, educators, and residents on what not to flush



This toolkit is provided as a deliverable of the 2023 FOG task force that explored industry, community, and residential needs for FOG and rags related guidance.

To further support community outreach efforts, we are happy to announce that Angie Peterson is our new FOG and Rags Coordinator. Angie is the contact person for communities when they seek assistance in addressing FOG and rag issues in their local sanitary sewer systems. Angie has worked with the Industrial Waste & Pollution Prevention group for 10 years as a technician.

Meet our newly hired technicians

[Evan Anderson and Krista Greengrass](#)

Evan Anderson and Krista Greengrass joined us on April 8. Their main duties will be to conduct wastewater compliance monitoring at permitted industries and from permitted liquid waste haulers, as well as respond to spills to the Metropolitan Disposal System. They fill the open positions left by Angie Peterson who was promoted and James Pham who left in January.



Evan Anderson, Industrial Waste Technician

Evan has a bachelor's degree in microbiology with an environmental emphasis. Evan has experience working in a laboratory as well as working in a stormwater management department. He is excited to be a part of an organization that strives towards protecting our environment and communities and playing a role in this mission.



Krista Greengrass, Industrial Waste Technician

Krista has a bachelor's degree in biology/microbiology and a master's degree in microbiology. Krista has experience working in a laboratory and performing surface water sampling and testing.

We are excited to have Evan and Krista join our team and are confident that their previous experience will help them easily transition into their new roles with the Met Council.

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For online reporting information and assistance, contact our support team: 651-602-4789

For further information on Open Channel News, contact Maggie Lundell: 651-602-4769



2024 Industrial User rates and fees

The 2024 Industrial user rates and fees approved by the Metropolitan Council in December 2023.

Permit fees (paid annually):

- \$700 to \$12,350 depending on permit status for Standard, Special, and Liquid Waste Hauler Permits
- \$450 for Sewer Cleaning Waste Hauler General Permits
- \$500 for all other General Permits

Strength charges for wastewater discharged on site:

- \$0.310 per excess pound of total suspended solids (TSS)
- \$0.155 per excess pound of chemical oxygen demand (COD)

Full-cost recovery rates for treatment of industrial wastewater hauled to MCES disposal sites:

- \$0.4130 per excess pound of TSS
- \$0.2065 per excess pound of COD

Production-based strength charge for microbrewery and brewpub facilities on General Permit:

- \$0.972 per beer barrel

Liquid Waste Hauler load charges:

- \$12.74 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Holding Tank wastes
- \$61.60 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Septage and Commercial wastes
- \$78.45 per 1,000 gallons for Portable Toilet wastes
- \$76.60 per 1,000 gallons for Out-of-Service Area Domestic wastes

Service fee for Out-of-Service Area loads:

- \$15.00 per 1,000 gallons

Industrial Capacity Charge (ICC):

- \$2.31 per 1,000 gallons
- \$2.96 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$4.35 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – Elko New Market



Sewer Availability Charge (SAC): (paid to the local community for use of the metropolitan disposal system (MDS))

- \$2,485 per SAC unit (1 unit = 274 gallons per day)
- \$3,185 per SAC unit Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$4,685 per SAC unit Rural Center – Elko New Market

Temporary Capacity Charge (TCC): (paid directly to MCES for temporary use of the MDS)

- \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons
- \$1.60 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$2.36 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – Elko New Market

For more information visit Met Council's [Industrial Waste Rates and Fees](#) website.

Let's stay connected!

To make sure you receive important information regarding your permit, add the following emails to your address book:

MCESIndustrialOnlineReporting@metc.state.mn.us and

METC@public.govdelivery.com. (*GovDelivery is a news delivery system, it is not an active email account.*)



To update your contact information, please contact the [IWPP staff](#) assigned to your permit or email iwpp@metc.state.mn.us.