

# OPEN CHANNEL NEWS

News bulletin from Metropolitan Council Environmental Services



## October 2024 - Issue #64

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 and 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. IWPP 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!

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## Celebrating Peak Performance

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services continues to achieve some of the best National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit compliance in the country.

All nine of our water resource recovery facilities received national recognition in July for excellence in compliance with federal clean water permit limits in 2023, while the National Association of Clean Water Agencies reports that only 50% of its public utility members earned Peak Performance recognition in 2023.

In 2023, we were 99.97% in compliance with NPDES permit limits for our 24,400 effluent water quality data points.

Our Hastings and Saint Croix Valley facilities are among the top five facilities in the nation for longest held compliance records.

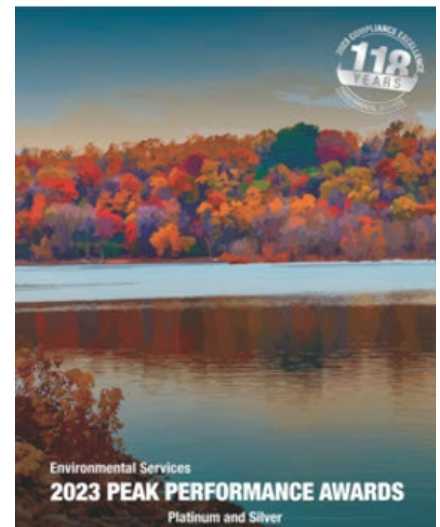
Our mission to protecting public health and the environment is made possible through a complex system of people, processes, and technologies, as well as a commitment to excellence. Industrial customers within the region contribute to our success by fulfilling their permit requirements.

### Platinum Award – five or more consecutive years of compliance

- Hastings (33 years)
- Saint Croix Valley (32 years)
- Blue Lake (18 years)
- Empire (16 years)
- Metropolitan (12 years)
- Seneca (seven years)

### Silver Award – no more than five violations per calendar year

- Eagles Point
- East Bethel
- Rogers



## Important dates:

- Oct. 15, 2024 – All Liquid Waste Hauler quarterly reports due using the [Industrial Online Reporting System](#)
- Oct. 31, 2024 - All Standard and Special quarterly reports due using the [Industrial Online Reporting System](#)

## Implementing an inspection checklist

We are implementing the use of a checklist during our routine inspections of industrial users. This checklist was developed to promote consistency in our inspections across various industry types and among our staff, and to ensure that we fulfill our inspection requirements as a delegated industrial pretreatment program.

As part of the pretreatment program, we are required to inspect Significant Industrial Users (SIUs) at least once per year, and we inspect non-SIUs at least once per permit cycle. The checklist was developed after thorough review of EPA's Industrial Inspection and Sampling Manual for Publicly Owned Treatment Works. It will be used by our staff during routine inspections of your facilities.

### The discussion topics included in the checklist are:

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| -Pre-Inspection                                 | -Pretreatment           |
| -Facility Information                           | -Meters and Volume/Flow |
| -Process Operations                             | -Determination          |
| -Stored Chemicals, Raw Materials, Product Tanks | -Waste Management       |
| -Process Wastestreams                           | -Actions Items          |
| -Other Discharge Wastestreams                   | -Additional Notes       |
| -Housekeeping                                   |                         |



The image shows a screenshot of a digital checklist titled "Standard Industrial User Inspection Checklist". The form includes fields for "Facility Name", "Permit", "Reason for Inspection", and "Inspector(s)". It contains several yes/no questions with checkboxes, such as "Is the industry strength chargeable?", "Does the industrial user have any open invoices?", "Does the facility pay Sewer Availability Charge or Industrial Capacity Charge?", "Is the industrial user a Significant Industrial User?", "Is the industrial user a Category Industrial User?", "Are there any open enforcement actions?", and "Are the facility diagram(s) and the process flow schematic(s) up to date?". Each question has a "Yes", "No", and "N/A" column with checkboxes.

Our staff utilize the Pre-Inspection section to prepare for the inspection at your facility. All other sections include information that our staff will discuss with you during the inspections. It includes things like your permit type, whether your wastewater is strength-chargeable, a list of any open invoices or enforcement actions, and a check if your required documents are up to date.

You may request a copy of the checklist prior to your next routine inspection from your primary Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) permit contact so that you too can prepare for and have information available at the time of the inspection. This will help expedite the information gathering part of the inspection, minimize the need for follow up actions, and leave more time for a facility walk through.

## Spill prevention and preparedness reminders

We need your help in protecting the collection system and our treatment plants. It's crucial that you remain vigilant in preventing spills to the sanitary sewer. Please incorporate spill prevention and preparedness steps into your facility's routine operations and maintenance procedures including but not limited to the following items:

### Spill prevention:

- Store chemicals, raw materials, and product in a spill containment area, on a spill containment pallet or within secondary containment
- Schedule routine maintenance on valves and other connection points to prevent failures
- Implement a communication process to double-check connections before product transfer and clearly label connections to prevent material from accidentally being sent to the wrong location
- Ensure that loss of power to an area or facility does not lead to spills



### Spill preparedness:

- Post this [spill reporting poster](#) or similar one in prominent areas
- Post a list of the names, titles, and phone numbers of the persons at your facility assigned to coordinate spill response actions
- Provide routine employee training on spill prevention, MN State Duty Officer notification, in-house notification, and other emergency response actions

For information on how to report a spill visit: [Spill Reporting - Metropolitan Council](#)

## Identifying PFAS sources

In June, the Metropolitan Council finalized its pollutant management plan for per – and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). This plan is part of a continued partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to identify and reduce PFAS in the environment. Because the Met Council's Blue Lake Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) in Shakopee has been designated by the MPCA as a high priority response treatment plant, we are initially focusing our work in the Blue Lake service area.

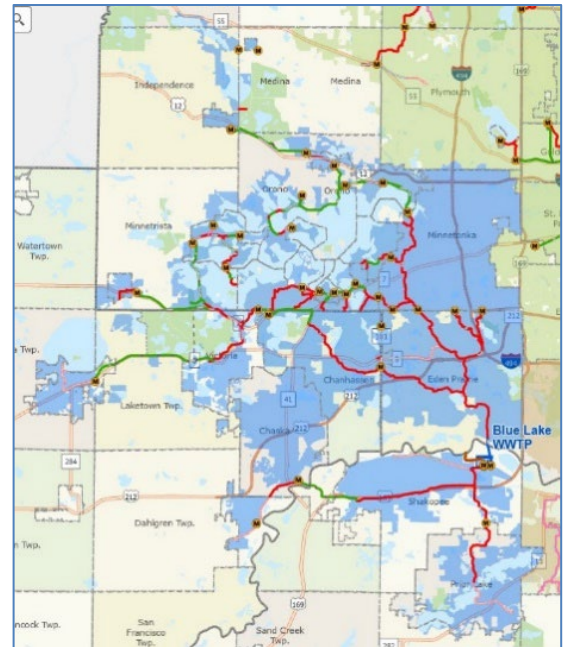
### 2024 source identification in the Blue Lake service area

Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) staff are identifying PFAS sources through sampling and industry self-assessments. This spring and early summer we conducted PFAS sampling at strategic locations within the Blue Lake wastewater conveyance system and at selected industries that have been identified as having the potential to discharge PFAS based on their self-reported North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes.

### Expectations of industries in the Blue Lake service area

We will be asking all industrial users within the Blue Lake service area to assess and report to us their potential to discharge PFAS to the sewer system. This will be our first step in helping industries eliminate or reduce PFAS use at their facility.

We plan to host a virtual meeting for Blue Lake permittees to explain how industries should go about assessing and reporting their potential to discharge PFAS to the sewer system. Invitations will be sent when a date is set. To find out which treatment plant your facility's wastewater is conveyed, refer to page one of your Industrial Discharge Permit.



*Map of the Blue Lake WRRF service*

### 2025 source identification

In 2025, we will be working on PFAS source identification and conducting sampling at permitted industrial users discharging to the other four plants included in the PFAS Management Plan – Seneca, Hastings, Rogers and East Bethel. Soon after we will expand efforts to our remaining plants, and so we encourage all permitted industrial users to begin working with your suppliers now to identify chemistries that contain PFAS and find PFAS-free alternatives.

In addition to identifying PFAS sources from industrial users in 2025, we will also be studying wastewater from carpet cleaning businesses to characterize PFAS compounds in the wastewater and use the data to develop best management practices to help them manage their wastewater.

## 2025 Industrial User rates and fees approved in July

The 2025 rates for industrial users were approved by the Metropolitan Council's Environment Committee in July. Strength charges are increasing 7.1% and permit fees are increasing 5.0% - 7.2% depending on the permit type. These rates were presented at the Industrial Customer Workshops in May.



View these rates at: [2025 Approved Industrial User Rates and Fees \(PDF\)](#)

Read about the 2025 wastewater rates for the region: [Met Council sets 2025 wastewater rates](#)

## OPEN CHANNEL NEWS

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## 2024 Industrial User rates and fees

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 Met Council 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 Met Council 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](mailto:MCESIndustrialOnlineReporting@metc.state.mn.us) and

[METC@public.govdelivery.com](mailto: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](mailto:iwpp@metc.state.mn.us).