OPEN CHANNEL *NEWS*

News bulletin from Metropolitan Council Environmental Services

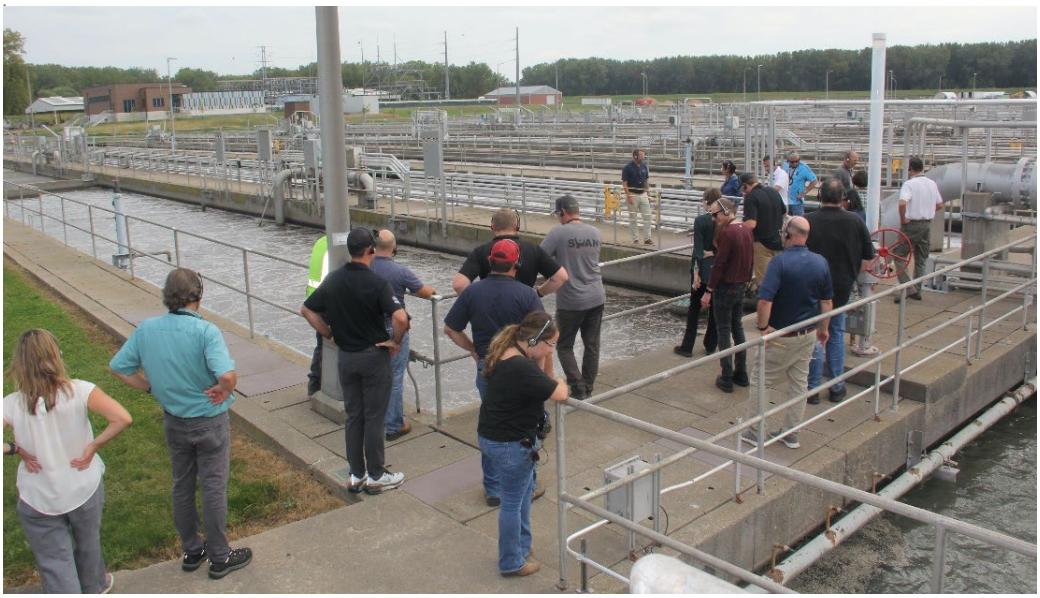
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

October 2025 - Issue #66

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.

In this issue



The Metro Water Resource Recovery Facility is impressive

Impressive, fascinating, and amazing are just a few of the words used by attendees to describe their impressions of the Metropolitan Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) after attending a tour in September, and we would agree.

The Metro WRRF is the largest wastewater treatment facility in Minnesota and among the largest in the nation. When it opened in 1938, it was the first treatment facility in a metropolitan area on the Mississippi River. Prior to operation, untreated wastewater was discharged directly into the river, threatening the environment. The discharge caused odor from floating sewage mats and severely degraded water quality, creating a public health hazard.

We've made significant environmental strides, regularly earning state and national awards for operational excellence. These efforts have reduced phosphorus discharges to the river by 90%, air emissions like particulates and mercury by 90%, solids volume by 95% for offsite disposal, and produced enough electricity to power 800 homes each year.

Tour attendees appreciated seeing how the facility treats an average of 172 million gallons of wastewater per day, processing about 70% of the total solids collected and treated before returning the resulting clean water to the Mississippi River.

Two Metro facility tours were offered this year for industrial customers, in May following the in-person industrial customer workshop and in September for those on the waiting list. The interest was exceptional with over 40 industrial customers participating.

Important dates:

- Oct. 15, 2025 – Liquid Waste Hauler quarterly reports due using the Industrial Online Reporting System.
- Oct. 31, 2025 – All Standard and Special quarterly reports due using the Industrial Online Reporting System.
- Oct. 31, 2025 – PFAS products survey due. Email completed survey to iwpp@metc.state.mn.us.

PFAS Products Survey due Oct. 31

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

We are requesting that all permitted industrial users who have not already completed a survey last year complete and submit the Met Council PFAS Product Survey to the Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention office via email at iwpp@metc.state.mn.us by Friday, Oct. 31, 2025.
On the survey, industries will report:

- Their facility's PFAS risk as determined by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) PFAS desktop screening tool.
- All PFAS containing products used or stored at the facility.
- The purpose and frequency/quantity usage of the PFAS containing product.
- The potential for the PFAS containing product to be sewered.
- Any known PFAS product substitutions.

Use the Metropolitan Council PFAS Product Survey Instructions for completing the survey. The document includes links to the MPCA desktop screening tool and other PFAS resources. You can also contact your IWPP permit staff for questions regarding the survey.
The data from these surveys will help to fulfil the source identification work for our PFAS Pollutant Management Plan. We have compiled a list of the PFAS-containing products reported in the surveys so far. To see this list and other PFAS information, visit: PFAS - Metropolitan Council.

IWPP PFAS work to date

Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention staff have been working on PFAS issues for well over a decade, beginning with our first PFAS survey in 2009 and 2010. Our work continued in 2012 when we began requiring landfills and other known industrial sources of PFAS to our system to sample for PFAS as part of their Industrial Discharge Permit and in 2017 when we initiated PFAS reduction work in our Empire service area.
Our most recent PFAS-work began in 2022 when we partnered with the MPCA as part of Minnesota's PFAS Blueprint, which set a course for furthering information and crafting policies around PFAS. Five Met Council treatment facilities are included in the MPCA's Wastewater Monitoring Plan, and we submitted a PFAS Pollutant Management Plan to MPCA that details how we will collect data, identify sources, and work on education of PFAS. The activities completed to date are:

- Required known sources to analyze and report for PFAS using EPA Method 1633A.
- Sampled known and suspected sources using EPA Method 1633A.
- Launched an educational website for businesses and residents, PFAS - Metropolitan Council.
- Conducted studies to identify sources of PFAS in our Blue Lake and Seneca service areas.
- Collaborated with other water resource recovery facilities in Minnesota to study how much PFAS is in residential wastewater.
- Collaborated with MPCA and 12 other communities to study PFAS in domestic septage.
- Began sampling for PFAS at permitted Significant Industrial Users across all nine service areas.
- Compiled a list of products known to contain PFAS, based on industrial user survey responses.

We received an MPCA grant to help offset the analytical costs of much of the sampling work we are conducting this year and next.

Upcoming PFAS work

In addition to having our permitted industrial users complete our PFAS products survey and strive to reduce or eliminate non-essential uses, our 2026 PFAS efforts include:

- Conducting collection system monitoring in our Metro WRRF, including residential and commercial sampling.
- Studying wastewater discharges from the carpet cleaning industry.
- Continuing to sample Significant Industrial Users.
- Implementing a policy for required PFAS monitoring for permitted Industrial Users.

MnTAP PFAS assistance available to industries

Many businesses are concerned about PFAS (per- and poly- fluoroalkyl compounds), also known as forever chemicals. Since PFAS compounds are not usually listed on Safety Data Sheets, how can you know if any of your products contain PFAS?
The Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP), has put together a process and tools to help Minnesota businesses identify PFAS in their operations.
There are two main ways to identify which products are most likely to contain PFAS.

- To identify the most common uses of PFAS by industry, MnTAP created a customized Excel tool (based on the PFAS Guide developed by ChemSec). This tool also highlights common uses found in many facilities regardless of industry, such as floor coverings and waxes, bearings, and roofing materials.
- Functions most associated with PFAS include water, oil, and stain repellence, friction reduction, durability, non-stick coatings, lubrication, anti-static properties, mold release, and flame retardance. MnTAP can analyze product lists (.xlsx, .txt, or .csv) for these and other common PFAS functionalities. In addition, MnTAP can check available CAS Numbers against lists of known PFAS as there is no universal list of every material included in MN's definition of PFAS. Product lists can be from SDS databases, purchasing data, or compiled manually. Reach out to MnTAP if you would like to have your product list assessed.

Asking your supplier is the best way to be sure if PFAS is present. Given the many definitions of PFAS, MnTAP has prepared a letter template to explain what is needed for compliance with Minnesota regulations.
This is a long process that can feel daunting. Know that MnTAP services are confidential, at no cost, and non-regulatory. Visit MnTAP's PFAS website or contact Jane Paulson, senior engineer, at Janep2@umn.edu (612-624-1826) for help.

New Liquid Waste Hauler Load Tracker Template available

A new version of the Liquid Waste Hauler Load Tracker Template is now available. The new version includes:

- Third and Commercial as an option in the Disposal Site drop-down menu, and
- A new volume summary tab that will automatically sort and tally the load volumes that you enter into the tracker tab by Disposal Site and Waste Type.

New template in IORS

The new template has been uploaded into the Industrial Online Reporting System (IORS).
If you manually enter your load information into IORS when completing your report, you do not need to do anything different.
If you use the copy/paste feature to enter your load information into IORS when completing your report, you will need to transfer your next reporting period data into the new template first. **The old template will no longer work with the copy/paste feature.**
Download the new template: LWH Load Tracker Template . Get updated instructions for completing your discharge report with the new template: LWH Discharge Report Instructions

IORS support

If you would like assistance with transferring your 2025 load information from the old template into the new template or have any questions regarding the changes, please contact the IORS Support Team at MCESIndustrialOnlineReporting@metc.state.mn.us or 651-602-4789.

2026 Industrial User rates and fees adopted in July

The 2026 rates and fees for industrial users were approved by the Met Council's Environment Committee in July. These rates were presented at the Industrial Customer Workshops in May.
View these rates at: 2026 Adopted Industrial User Rates and Fees (PDF). Read about the 2026 wastewater rates for the region: Met Council sets 2026 wastewater treatment rates.

Open Channel News

Published by the Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) section of the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services division.
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1805

Contacts

Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention Section Manager
Tina Nelson: 651-602-4728
Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention general information
Jami Haider: 651-602-4703
Industrial user rates, fees, and Industrial Capacity Charge (ICC)/Sewer Availability Charge (SAC)
Kristi Goble: 651-602-8114
Online reporting and assistance
Support team: 651-602-4789
Open Channel News
Maggie Lundell: 651-602-4769

2025 Industrial User rates and fees

Permit fees (paid annually):

- $750 to $13,050 depending on permit status for Standard, Special, and Liquid Waste Hauler Permits
- $475 for Sewer Cleaning Waste Hauler General Permits
- $525 for all other General Permits

Strength charges for wastewater discharged on site:

- $0.3320 per excess pound of total suspended solids (TSS)
- $0.1660 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:

- $1.041 per beer barrel

Liquid Waste Hauler load charges:

- $12.74 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Holding Tank wastes
- $64.65 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Septage and Commercial wastes
- $82.54 per 1,000 gallons for Portable Toilet wastes
- $79.65 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):

- $2.35 per 1,000 gallons
- $3.01 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – East Bethel
- $4.43 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), city may include additional local charge)

- $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 Industrial Waste Rates and Fees on the Met Council 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 Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention staff assigned to your permit or email iwpp@metc.state.mn.us.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL