

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Wastewater Subcommittee --Technical Coordination Committee -- Meeting Notes

May 13, 2015

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Kristin Rowles led the group in an open discussion on the 2009 Wastewater Implementation Actions. She asked committee members to note their comments and input on the hand-out listing implementation actions from the 2009 Wastewater plan. She said that input could also be submitted to the email address planupdate@northgeorgiawater.com. Kristin led a discussion with the committee about the 2009 implementation actions with a focus on areas for refinement in the plan update. The following is a summary of the discussion:

Planned Wastewater Treatment Facilities

- We need a more clear definition of backup power. Generators versus dual-feed? What is meant by dual-feed? Biggest issue is obviously costs. Generators not cheap or easy to maintain.
- Definition of back-up power is important. In many cases, we can get to our facilities with back-up power in a timely manner. That serves as back-up power for us. Could it be defined in terms of response time?
- Is there firm pumping capacity of each pump station? Some have trouble documenting this, but many have inventory of firm capacity (usually as a part of their asset management program). Relatively easy to comply with this requirement.
- Plan was originally designed with large systems replacing smaller systems, but smaller communities are keeping their facilities (and expanding them). The reality of the situation on the ground is different than the original plan. Need to revisit some of these parts of the plan. Some of the smaller facilities might never be consolidated – not worth the cost.
- How would a big system plan for taking a smaller one without any ‘tap fees’?

Wastewater Collection System Inspection and Maintenance

- Smaller communities still need paper option for system inventory and mapping.
- I/I relates to age of system.
- I/I estimation is difficult for older systems.
- I/I estimation requires \$ and people.
- Reducing I/I can be more cost-effective than expanding facilities. Proactive collection system maintenance can help to ensure you don't build new facility infrastructure that you don't need. Inspections should be completed before any facility is expanded.
- I&I inspection programs offer a good incentive to keeping sewer easements maintained.
- CMOM consent decree permittees are already reflected in the plan.
- Do we need to do more with GA EPD CMOM program?
- Need to focus on F”R”OG, including rages. FOG education has been successful. Door hangers for apartments are good. We would like a FROG door hanger from the District, including a Spanish version.
- Do we need legislation to outlaw “flushable” rags?
- Older businesses have grease traps challenges. We still have issues in some areas.
- Rags are a relevant issue with septage as well as sewer.

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- Clayton County does radio advertisements on FOG.
- Pilot studies/case studies on FOG collection bins and 3rd party collection would be helpful.
- Water conservation measures leads to declining flows, longer detention time in collection system, and H₂S generation and corrosion problems in collection system. Is this problem for others? YES! Try to consider this issue in integrated modeling.
- Most did not think that increased concentration of wastewater is a problem, although some see higher levels of ammonia at the plant.
- Some are trying to address the H₂S problem with chemicals or re-opening closed air release valves. (Odor control might be needed for the latter.)

Septic and Decentralized Systems

- With regard to septic planning, technically there is no limitation (other than money) for siting septic systems. So, it is hard to identify areas that should be considered critical areas for septic.
- Coordination meetings with local health departments are a good opportunity to plan. Consider using the plan update to identify key topics to be discussed by the local utility and local health department in their coordination meetings.
- “Unsuitable” area maps for septic systems were difficult to find when we coordinated with the health department.
- Pump out requirement is needed, but it is tough to implement. The State cannot regulate maintenance.
- Douglasville-Douglas County requires septic maintenance in the Dog River watershed as a condition of on-going water service. This required legislative change.
- For septage disposal, haulers pay drivers by the load, and this incentivizes illegal dumping to avoid costs of disposal at WWTP).
- Statewide legislation to address septic maintenance and hauling might be needed.
- GAWP conference will include discussion of septage issues in July.
- Fayette County incentivizes septic maintenance with a stormwater utility fee credit.
- One community has received zero gallons of septage for disposal in the last 1.5 years.
- We need to focus attention to public education and informing new homeowners about proper septic management during the real estate transaction.
- We should prioritize a list of issues that we would like to address with this plan update and focus our attention.

A subcommittee will be created to discuss septic related issues for the plan update. Two members volunteered for the subcommittee. An invitation to join the subcommittee will be sent to other TCC members.

Members were encouraged to submit their hand-outs with comments at the end of meeting.

Data Collection for Plan Update

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Robert Osborne and Mike Friedlander (Black and Veatch) discussed the wastewater generation forecasting process and data collection efforts.

Next Steps

Steve Simpson wrapped up the meeting by outlining key next steps in the plan update process:

- Wastewater Data Collection Request
- Implementation Action Items
 - Stakeholder Feedback
 - Criteria Identification and Weighting
 - Prioritization
- Wastewater Generation Projections

Danny Johnson noted that the first draft of the Utility Climate Resiliency Study will likely be released to the TCC for review and comment in late June with a three week comment period.