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RIB MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE DISTRICT, RIB MOUNTAIN, WISCONSIN

The Clarifier

VOL. 261 JUNE 2025

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The Clarifier is the publication of the Wisconsin Wastewater Operators' Association and is intended to inform and educate the membership on issues related to the treatment and control of wastewater. The Clarifier is produced five (5) times each year: February, April, June, September, and December. All members are encouraged to contribute to the mission of the Clarifier.

The Wisconsin Wastewater Operators' Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating, informing, and advancing the wastewater profession. WWOA has approximately 2,000 members divided throughout six regions: Southeast, Southern, Lake Michigan, North Central, Northwest, and West Central.

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Presidents message: Embracing summer and encouraging wastewater professionals to take time for themselves

School is out, and our children and grandchildren have joyfully embraced the freedom of summer. Alongside their abundant energy, summer reminds us to pause and appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds us. This season is not just a time for play; it's an opportunity to reconnect with the environment and the people we cherish most.

As the warm, adventure-filled days of summer arrive, I encourage everyone to embrace the opportunities this season brings. Whether it's hiking through scenic trails, enjoying water sports at the lake, or simply tending to your garden, summer offers countless ways to connect with nature and revel in the joys of the outdoors. These moments of joy are not just fleeting pleasures but acute reminders of the importance of preserving the environment for generations to come.



In consideration of these seasonal activities, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of our wastewater professionals. The work you do behind the scenes is vital to maintaining the cleanliness and health of our communities and

natural surroundings, ensuring that lakes, rivers, and green spaces remain pristine for everyone to enjoy. Your dedication safeguards public health, protects wildlife habitats, and allows us the privilege of experiencing the wonders of nature without compromise.

Your expertise in managing wastewater, recycling resources, and upholding environmental standards is a cornerstone of sustainability. It is through your tireless efforts that we can look forward to summers spent in clean water, under clear skies, and amidst thriving ecosystems. Your contributions touch every aspect of our lives, fostering a world where nature and humanity coexist harmoniously.

As we anticipate summer adventures, let us not forget the opportunities to enhance our skills and knowledge. Training programs available through WWOA provide

invaluable resources for wastewater professionals to further their expertise and stay ahead in this evolving field.

Additionally, the annual conference in La Crosse is just a few months away—a pivotal event for networking, learning, and exchanging ideas. Registration is now open, and accommodations are filling up quickly, so be sure to secure your spot and make the most of this enriching experience.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication. Here's to a season of enjoyment and cherished memories for everyone.

Marc Stephanie



Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District

With the help of Strand Associates Inc., about 2014 Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District (RMMSD) began the facility planning process. RMMSD is a wastewater treatment plant in the Wausau area that serves five communities: Village of Rib Mountain, Village of Weston, Village of Rothschild, Village of Kronenwetter and City of Mosinee.

RMMSD was formed in 1983 by Rothschild, Weston and Rib Mountain. Kronenwetter joined in the mid-1990s and Mosinee in early 2010s.



Five Fairbanks influent pumps with new forcemain center left, existing forcemain piping center right

RMMSD has about a 4-mile-long sewer interceptor on the East side of the Wisconsin River where the communities connect. Sample stations are on the East side of the Wisconsin River also. The interceptor travels under the Wisconsin River to the pump house on the West side of the Wisconsin River where it is pumped up to the plant by five Pentair Fairbanks pumps.

The wastewater receives preliminary treatment in the grit building where a Vulcan step screen removes rags and aerated grit chamber removes grit. The grit chamber



Existing Vulcan step bar screen, new Vulcan step bar screen going in on the right side of picture

overflow goes to three primary clarifiers where organic solids settle to the bottom and are pumped to the primary digester. Primary clarifier overflow mixes with return activated sludge (RAS) and flows to four aeration tanks for secondary treatment. Mixed liquor flows out of the aeration tanks into two secondary clarifiers. Most of the biological solids are returned to mix with primary clarifier overflow. The waste activated sludge (WAS) gets pumped to dissolved air flotation (DAF) tanks for further



Blower room, two PD blowers one Innovair



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solids/water separation. The solids from the DAF go to the primary digester and the water portion gets returned to the



UV building on left, UV in use in middle, old chlorine contact tank on right

wet well via the process return. Secondary clarifier overflow continues to ultraviolet (UV) disinfection (May through September) then on to the outfall in the Wisconsin River.

RMMSD also has a secondary digester for sludge then treated sludge is pumped up to our sludge storage tanks to wait for land application on farm fields.

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Sludge in tank, beginning of hauling season



Sludge hauling truck with rinse

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Septage hauler dump station in foreground, primary digester with crane supports in background

About 2014 RMMSD began the facility planning process as the plant was then 30 years old. The result of that planning was a multi-phase project plan to modify/upgrade the plant for permit compliance and extend the life of the plant for at least another 20 years.

The Phase 1 construction project was completed in 2019 and included the following: installation of a new transfer

switch for the generator, change fluorescent bulbs to LED, a new operations building for technicians with future lab and better showering facilities, replace influent piping in the pump house along with assorted valve maintenance and modify piping off the primary clarifiers.

The Phase 2 project includes addition of a new forcemain from the pumphouse to the grit building, new HVAC in each building, new motor control centers in each building, a new gas room to handle our digester gas, a second chemical tank for phosphorus removal chemical, digester mixer replacement, digester cover rehab, new second step bar screen, new aeration membranes, new diesel backup



New forcemain entrance to pump house, waiting to be connected to pipe in dry well

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New waste gas burner pad in foreground, primary digester cover sections mid-ground, solar array in background



Aeration tank #2 mid installation of new flexible membranes replacing stone



Existing phosphorus removal chemical tank on left, new PRC tank on right. Used to use Alum, now use PAC.



New diesel generator

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generator and a solar array that is expected to provide about 40% of the plant electrical needs. The project is expected to continue until Fall 2026 and costs about \$24 Million.

CD Smith is the general contractor for Phase 2, August Winter is the mechanical/HVAC contractor and Pieper is the electrical contractor. CD Smith was also the general contractor for the original plant construction in 1984.

Anticipated future phase 3 or 4 would be to address new regulations such as PFAS or surface water nitrogen limits.



*Eric Donaldson,
Director*



Technicians:

*Brian Pomrening, Johnny Lang, Andy Heise (superintendent),
Trevor Skerven, Troy Hering*

Our staff consists of four technicians: Trevor Skerven, Brian Pomrening, Johnny Lang and Troy Hering, Andy Heise is the Superintendent, Sandra Balz is the Administrative Clerk and Eric Donaldson is the Director.

We have a five-member Commissioner Board to govern RMMSD. Our commissioners are Bob Stavran (President), Tom Kipp (Secretary), Keith Biedermann, Darin Westover and Kevin Breit.




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Nature in action at the Rib Mountain plant

As I (Eric) was driving out on 2 July 2024, I noticed this immature eagle perched on the fence. The eagle sat there just a few feet away as I snapped 9 or 10 pictures.



The bird must have been hungry as the next day we came in to see the headless turkey near our maintenance shop.

2025 Water Week Fly-In – A Multi-Organization Advocacy Effort for the Water and Wastewater in an Uncertain Federal Environment

Authors: Brandon Koltz, Chris Tippery, Lisa Twarog

Water Environment Federation in conjunction with other professional water and wastewater associations gather in Washington DC each spring to receive updates from USEPA, other federal agencies and Congressional leaders and staff regarding upcoming agency changes and initiatives, as well as legislative actions and funding plans. This is also an opportunity to visit state congressional offices to advocate for continued federal funding and select legislative action. Member associations are encouraged to send delegations to visit Capitol Hill. This year Central States Wisconsin, joined by colleagues from AWWA and NACWA, provided a unified “One Water” message for our congressional meetings. The Fly-In was held April 7-9.

With the new administration, there is a significant change in agency direction and overall priorities. However, funding needs and regulatory clarity continue to be necessities

for our local state member associations and the national membership. WEF assembled a summary of requests for Congress that included full funding for the Clean Water programs (SRF, CSO & Reuse, Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, etc.), Stormwater Programs, and Water Research Programs. Policy requests were also made for PFAS (exemption for utilities as principal responsible parties under CERCLA), wipes legislation, Low Income Household Water Assistance programs, and Tax Free Municipal Bonds (deter proposals made to eliminate tax free status). A multiorganization request sheet was also assembled mirroring the WEF summary. A Wisconsin specific summary document endorsed by eight other Wisconsin organizations (summarized Wisconsin utilization of and continued need for federal SRF capitalization support, need for workforce development and public education,

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and specific criteria issues for Wisconsin.

Water Week Policy Briefing

The Water Week Policy briefing was held April 9 with updates from USEPA, other Agency representatives and Congressional leaders.

USEPA Updates:

Andrew Sawyer/Director/Office of Wastewater Management stated that USEPA is focused on **five major pillars**:

- “Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American”
- “Restore American Energy Dominance”
- “Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership”
- “Make the United States the Artificial Intelligence Capital of the World”
- “Protecting and Bringing Back American Auto Jobs”

Further comments included:

- EPA is responding to executive orders including a declaration of a national energy emergency.

- An effort is being made to increase affordability by using existing programs to reduce household costs – 12.5 million households currently have unaffordable costs (water bills greater than 4.5% of the household income).
- There are challenges facing overall SRF funding because congressionally directed funds reduce capitalization. It currently funds more than \$9 billion dollars in project costs annually. Additionally, as of April 2025, WIFIA has provided nearly \$50 billion in loans. The Office of Wastewater Management intends to continue technical assistance.
- The recent Supreme Court decision of San Francisco vs. USEPA determined that making a WPDES permittee responsible for the end result water quality in the body of water to which they discharge is an overstep of USEPA authority. His office is assessing the impacts of this ruling.

Jennifer McClain/Director of Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water also addressed the five pillars. Additionally, she noted:

- 50 years of progress toward safe drinking water since the Safe Drinking Water Act passed in 1974.

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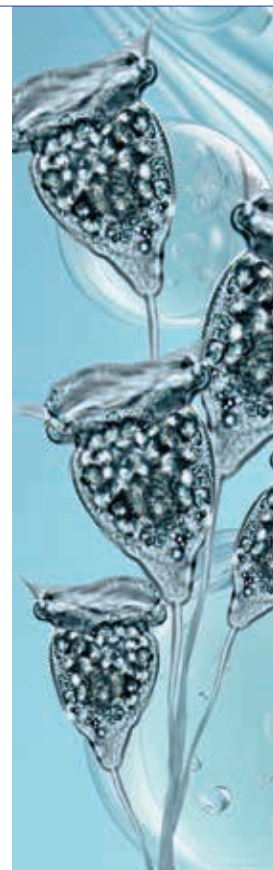
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- There is a need for \$650 billion for drinking water infrastructure investment needed over the next 20 years. This will be accomplished through cooperative federalism.
- Sustainability and resilience are needed for threats. Smaller communities need resources for cybersecurity and drinking water systems need emergency response plans.
- PFAS mitigation must be considered in affordability analyses. Timelines for lead and copper rule should also address affordability.
- The EPA is available to provide technical assistance for water systems, specifically regarding lead, PFAS, and engineering support.

Tanya Hodge Mottley/Acting Deputy Director/Office of Science and Technology also addressed the five pillars. Activities for this office include:

- Reconsideration of the 2024 Steam & Electric Rule
- Revise the rules for produced water for reuse (oil industry)
- The Water Reuse Program started 5 years ago and has

been pursuing opportunities for water reuse including in the chip manufacturing and data center cooling industries.

- The draft biosolids PFOA/PFAS risk assessment has been pulled back and will include assessment of biosolids risk with respect to food crops and risk associated with incineration.
- Draft effluent guidance for pesticides that are also subject to FIFRA regulations
- Two additional PFAS compounds will have criteria, now 40 total
- Examination of bioavailability for copper, lead, zinc and cobalt.
- Working with eight (8) metal groups (CRADA) to update aquatic life criteria for copper, lead, nickel, and zinc.
- Development of a 5-year water reuse plan.
- Office of Science and Technology is looking for innovations for permitting and overall solutions
- NOTE: Subsequent to the Fly-in meeting, Administrator Zeldin announced a 55% cut in EPA's budget and elimination of the Office of Science and Technology and

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the Office of Research and Development. It is unclear how EPA will manage these functions. Congress must address these cuts and reorganization in the next budget or with separate legislation.

Brian Frazer/Director Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds provided an update, also referring to the 5 Pillars:

- His office has responsibilities for ecosystem protection and requirements and statutory activities conducted under 312, 319, 320 and 404.
- Coastal Zone, nonpoint programs, the Gulf Hypoxia programs, require coordination among states and tribes as well as EPA.
- The definition of wetlands is unclear as it relates to Waters of the United States (WOTUS). They are managing 8 ocean sites, a toxic/hypoxic condition in the State of Washington. They are working on distributing previously appropriated funds.

Jessica Knowles/USEPA Senior Advisor to the Assistant Administrator Office of Water is from Central Wisconsin.

She provided broad comments regarding the Office of Water.

- The goal is clean water for all. The Office of Water will strive to meet these goals with flexibility, cut red tape, expertise of existing staff, and streamline funding for SRF & WIFIA. Compliance should be the focus of funding.
- **They would like to hear from us – where do we need help? Technical Assistance programs?**
- A course for compliance should be developed for PFAS and MCLs with the resources to do so. Water Reuse will be an area of emphasis. WOTUS will be redefined consistent with the Sockett decision, they would like to put an end to the swings in definition.
- There are scheduled listening sessions to clarify the WOTUS redefinition. The final listening session of the initial phase occurred on May 19, 2025. There is a Second Listening Session for the Public TBA.

Noller Herbert/United States Department of Agriculture/ Science & Technology Natural Resource Conservation Service spoke about the agency's programming for water. Source water protection is a priority as is seeking innovation with fairness for farmers and ranchers. He stressed working with County NRCS agents as partners. NRCS can assist in water quality trading programs with conservation planning, leading to informed decision-making. He discussed conservation innovation grants.

Senator Mark Kelly/Arizona stressed that water is a bipartisan issue. No matter where you live, you deserve clean water. He noted the progress made with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and stated that Congress would be working on the next Infrastructure Bill after the current authorizations run out in 2026. A long term funding bill is needed and he noted there are challenges with the current permitting system. He suggested that Congress should re-examine the current laws to bring efficiency to project delivery. The next area for innovation is Water Reuse. He is concerned that small communities need better access and should not be left behind. He is concerned about the reductions in agency resources at the federal level.

Drew Griffin/Invariant Corporation discussed the current situation. He noted projects are stalled when there is a lack of appropriations. Our water sector needs to be strong advocates for the next infrastructure bill, and it needs to be bipartisan. He also noted that there are opportunities despite the current uncertainties. He suggested that it might be time for consideration of a risk sharing agenda.

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Jared Huffman/Representative from the 2nd District in California also noted that water, unlike other issues, is a bipartisan issue. He spoke about Tribal priorities (\$2.5 billion in tribal claims), the need for the Corps of Engineers to prioritize water supply and resilience (\$4 billion for drought resilience). We need to hang on to good politicians, and we need to complete investments.

Stormwater Policy Meeting.

Urban Stormwater Management has been historically underfunded. Yet urban stormwater has been shown to be a significant pollutant source. And flood events, exacerbated by occurrence of extreme events cause increasing damage. WEF and the National Municipal Stormwater Alliance (NMSA) host a stormwater policy meeting during Water Week. A separate informational document regarding stormwater issues and needs was updated for congressional visits and is available to our membership.

The Keynote Speaker, Joseph Kane from the Brookings Institute noted the need for increased investment in stormwater infrastructure: 256% increase in flood losses compared to 20 years ago, a decline in federal funding,

and a funding gap increase. Stormwater management is complicated in that it doesn't respect state or municipal boundaries, rather it must be considered on a watershed basis. He said there is a need for workforce development specific to stormwater management and maintenance.

A Congressional Update was provided by Tim Petty/staff member for the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. He noted that they are supportive of the Stormwater Centers of Excellence, renewal of the Water Resources Development Act (Corps of Engineers funding and some stormwater management is included in WRDA), and PFAS issues are a priority. Stormwater agencies need to work with the states to see that stormwater projects are ranked on the SRF priority list. It was noted that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) authorization expires in 2026; bipartisan support is needed to renew this funding. He urged contacting congressmen to support reauthorization and to bring other issues to their attention.

A legal panel (Fred Andes/Barnes & Thornburg, Amanda Aspatore/ General Counsel NACWA, Becky Hammer/Senior Attorney NRDC, Sean Roland Deputy Director Association of Clean Water Administrators) discussed recent issues.

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Discussion included:

Chevron Doctrine reversal with the Looper decision. Deference is not given to agency analysis; factual information should still predominate decision-making; previous regulations would need to go through the regulatory process to be modified

Stormwater permits with Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP) requirements are fuzzy and compliance is not well defined.

The impact of CSOs after Long Term Control Plan implementation is not well understood and further requirements are ill defined

Residual Designation Authority (RDA) for specific pollutants in stormwater permits often results in permits being immediately out of compliance for constituents not controllable by the permittee. Permittees should be aware of these risks. RDAs make permittees vulnerable to 3rd part lawsuits.

A legislative CERCLA exemption for MS4 permittees for PFAS is needed

The Federal and State Update was provided by Chris Kloss/USEPA Director of Permits Office of Water, Michael Dean/Clean Water Revolving Fund USEPA and Zach Shafer/Assistant Secretary of Policy/Maryland Department of the Environment.

Chris Kloss noted that 2 grants were out and three in progress for the Stormwater Centers of Excellence. Chris noted wastewater needs total \$630 billion and stormwater needs are \$115 billion. He advocated Integrated Planning to incorporate stormwater into overall priorities. He noted the need to identify sources of PFAS when found in stormwater. Market-based approaches (trading, etc.) may be used in permitting approaches and green infrastructure. Electronic reporting should make permitting and compliance more efficient. Recent stormwater permitting has required more strategically located sampling to better define the permit requirements.

Michael Dean discussed earmarks versus undesignated SRF funding, noting that some earmarks are essentially flood control projects. Earmarks have reduced the undesignated SRF appropriation. SRF funding is needed to make projects affordable; stormwater utilities also need a dependable fee structure. Public education is needed with respect to the stormwater management needs and the related financial requirements.

Zach Shafer stated Maryland is a “water state”; Chesapeake Bay is essential to the economy and to most of the population. Green infrastructure is being implemented to protect the Bay. A large challenge is that much of the watershed lies outside the state and TMDLs require pollutant reductions outside Maryland. Market-based solutions on a watershed basis are being pursued across state lines. Water quality is related to water quantity; pollutant transport during high flow events is a challenge – especially for nutrients and debris.

Wisconsin Congressional Meetings

The Wisconsin coalition of Curt Czarnecki, General Manager of the Kenosha Water Utility, Andrea Hey, Communications Director for the Green Bay Water Utility, Brandon Koltz of Brandon Koltz Water and Environmental Consulting LLC, Lisa Twarog of Town & Country Engineering, Inc. and Chris Tippet of CDM Smith met with the offices of our Senators, Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin, along with House Representatives from the

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continued from page 18*Bryan Steil, District 1*

District 4 and Scott Fitzgerald from District 5. We presented a unified, One Water, message focusing on pertinent issues to Wisconsin of continued funding and non-degradation

*Mark Pocan, District 2*

following Districts: Bryan Steil from District 1, Mark Pocan from District 2 and Tony Wied from District 8. We also met with staffers from the offices of Gwen Moore from

of the State Revolving Funds by Congressionally Directed Spending (Earmarks), workforce development, PFOA / PFAS removal from drinking water

and contained within biosolids, other emerging contaminants and cyber security. We appreciated the Representative's and their staffer's time and attention to our concerns.

*Tony Wied, District 8*

An item that was addressed during the National Government Affairs WEF meeting was potentially redrafting the Clean Water Act, from 1972. This Law hasn't had significant changes since its original version and we discussed the consideration of "One Water" legislation that addresses drinking water, stormwater, groundwater and wastewater or even "One Environment" legislation to also include air, vegetation and wildlife. It is potentially time to holistically address these environmental concerns.

With a new federal administration and Congress, it is pertinent that we continue to advocate for our Water and

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Wastewater industry. For far too long, we've allowed ourselves to be viewed as a commodity and failed to get our message out to the general public about the unique and talented people who work in water and wastewater.

One significant impact from our 2025 Congressional visits was Representative Tony Wied (Wisconsin 8th District) co-sponsoring the Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act. The bill would exempt public water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, municipalities, state political subdivisions, and their contractors from liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) for PFAS releases, provided they handle these substances in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Specifically, the exemption covers activities such as water treatment, biosolids management, effluent discharge, and water storage, as long as these actions are conducted according to existing federal and state water management guidelines. This legislation aims to provide clarity and protection for water system operators dealing with these potentially harmful chemicals while maintaining accountability for egregious mishandling, which was recommended by our Wisconsin coalition.

If there are pending and pertinent issues to your community, please let Brandon, Chris, Lisa or the Wisconsin Section Government Affairs Committee know so that we can address those concerns with our elected representatives in 2026.

Continuing Advocacy – Let your voice be heard

We have seen that communication with our legislative leaders regarding the regulatory and financial challenges and needs for the water and wastewater industry has been effective. But once a year visits must be supplemented by additional advocacy. Advocacy is simply educating our legislative representatives of the effects of different actions at the federal level. With the change of federal administration and changes to the Office of EPA, your voice is critical.

WEF routinely prepares example letters on topics of concern through the Water Advocacy program that can be sent to our representatives. The letters can be edited to make it specific to a particular District. And experience has shown that these communications are most effective when from constituents of that district. This year it will be more important than ever to keep our legislative representatives informed. 📧

Fort Atkinson & CKSD host May Southern District meeting

The City of Fort Atkinson and the Consolidated Koshkonong Sanitary District (CKSD) teamed up to host the second meeting for the Southern District region of WWOA.



Erin Sweeney receiving plaque

This was the first Ops to Ops style meeting put on by the Southern District region and allowed for a much more hands on experience for those in attendance. The meeting started at the Fort Atkinson WWTP where 60 guests, including 52 members and 8 non-members (made up of equipment reps and Fort Atkinson staff) were welcomed by Erin Sweeney of Fort Atkinson's WWTP to their newly upgraded facility.

Nathan Cassity of Donohue and Associates gave a brief presentation on the construction overview of Fort Atkinson's 5-year journey to facility upgrade. The new facility has a design flow of 2.7 MGD and a service population of about 13,000 residents. The new facility upgrade brings the addition of biological phosphorous removal, covered aerobic digesters, tertiary filtration for low level phosphorous removal, and much more.



Nathan Cassity presenting

Following the facility overview, Andy Busscher from Staab, gave a presentation explaining the construction process. Fort Atkinson's facility upgrade started in April of 2021 and was completed in 2024. Andy emphasized the importance of both communication and safety during the entire construction period. As with most wastewater facilities undergoing large upgrades, being able to bypass processes and still remain in compliance is critical. This takes large amounts of planning and continuous communication by all parties involved.

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Alan Clemens of Altronex gave the last presentation, where he touched on the SCADA system at the Fort Atkinson facility and the major overhaul it received. Originally the plant was “patched” together using various different modes of communication (fiber, radios, etc.). During the SCADA enhancement process they were able to make the system feel more complete and more standardized in terms of both communication as well as controls.

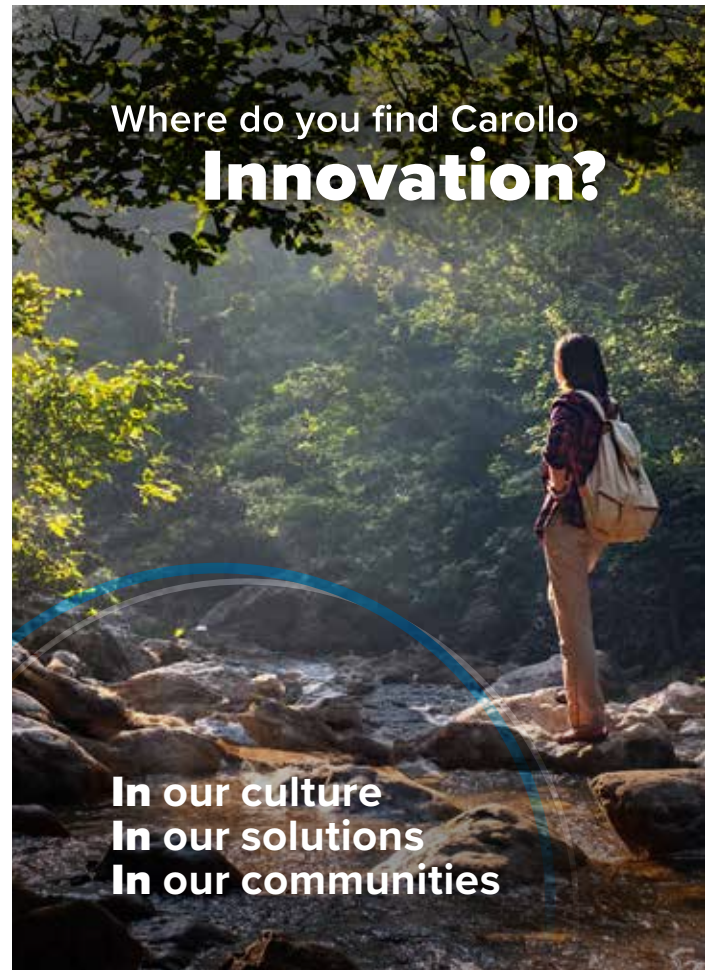
This concluded the presentations, and the attendees then broke up into small groups to tour the Fort Atkinson facility. Along the tour, different vendors were staged alongside their new processes that were implanted to Fort Atkinson's facility. Josh Voigt from Xylem was staged in the main lift station of the facility, and he spoke on the influent pumps that were new to the facility. Fort Atkinson added 4 45 HP pumps with easily accessible cleanouts. These pumps featured an “oilless design” that used a mix of about 70% water and 30% glycol for cooling. Josh offered up a few tips to the attendees as well. Firstly, he noted that vibration is the biggest killer to pumps and keep pumps free of debris and rags will greatly reduce vibrations. He also pointed out that when purchasing new pumps, it is important to understand your own facility's needs, in the sense that a pump may advertise at minimum speed of 40%, but your facility has a greater head pressure to overcome to lift the check valve where you may need to program the pumps with a higher minimum speed to lift those check valves and not overheat equipment.

Next stop on our tour was to the headworks screening building where we met up with Brian Serio of SAVECO North America, inc. The fine screens that Brian's team installed are 1/4” fine screens that operate off of differential level control. Along with the normal screening sections, the screen also has built in lifting fingers that allow for larger items like rags to be easily removed from the system. They have also added a grit scoop to the screen as well to prevent any grit buildup in front of the screens. These fine screens also feature an auto adjusting brush, which allows for a much greater lifespan when compared to manually adjusted brushes. This automatic brush allows for



Mechanical fine screens

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Aerzen blowers

They are currently running both positive displacement blowers as well as the more efficient screw style blowers.



Aerzen blower control panel

an average lifespan of 5 years and greatly reduces the need for maintenance work.

Following the fine screens, our next step was the blower room with Joel Schomo of Aerzen USA corp. He spoke on the different blower technologies in the new Fort Atkinson upgrade.

Fort Atkinson's blower setup is self-tuning and has the ability for remote access from the manufacturer.

Our next stop was the aerobic digesters. They explained that digestion was working well in the summer but very poorly in the winter months. To address

this issue, they added a large cover over the digesters to maintain a more favorable temperature range year-round. Currently the digesters are fed primary sludge as well as waste activated sludge prior to dewatering. With the new cover addition, Fort Atkinson is now able to produce a solids concentration of about 27%.



Low level phosphorus tertiary filters

The final stop at the Fort Atkinson facility was with Kristy Chycota of Aqua Aerobic Systems, inc. She presented their new tertiary filtration system. The filtration system works with an "Outside-in flow path" through cloth media filters. These filters work in different segments or stages and the media lasts 7-10 years based on how often they are rotated and dried.

Before moving on to the Koshkonong Sanitary District facility, we had our business meeting for the Southern District as well as our DNR update. For the business meeting, Joe Thompson spoke on the potential scholarship program changes and his plan to officially present those at the next Southern District meeting on August 12th in New Glarus. Marc Zimmerman presented the updated budget for approval. Jordan with the Wisconsin DNR gave an update. Jordan noted that you can now use the Operator Certification hotline for any exam questions. July 10th is the next opportunity for DNR testing. She finished by touching on the CMAR and how that is now available for use. Lastly, Kevin Burg of the State WWOA board gave an update. He also encouraged scholarship applications to all in attendance. Award nominations for both state and regional awards are due July 23rd. Lastly, the hotel block for the state conference is now open for booking.



Ben Heidemann receiving plaque

The second portion of the Ops-to-Ops tour was hosted by the Consolidated Koshkonong Sewer District. The Koshkonong facility is a lagoon style plant. The CKSD services a large area that consists of 3 different counties, 6 different sanitary districts in 4 different townships. To convey that wastewater to the plant, 22 lift stations are spread across their collection system

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with over 37 miles of sewer piping. The facility also went through a recent upgrade from 2019-2022. During that upgrade their lagoon system was changed. The current lagoons were elevated and deepened to try and keep them above water tables. Their new design flow is 900,000 gpd with a peak hourly flow of 4.27 MGD. CKSD is



Lagoon



Trojan UV system

currently operating under a TMDL and average flows around 500,000 gpd. This is a 3-cell lagoon system with UV disinfection and also doses Alum at 40 gpd. Each lagoon holds about 6 million gallons. Like many other facilities in Wisconsin, the CKSD really struggles with wet weather

events due to I&I and can see high flows for months if the surrounding lake and rivers are full.

The WWOA Southern District board would like to thank all guests, all the vendors and speakers, as well as both facilities for hosting and putting together a great tour for all in attendance. 🌐

2025 Clarifier deadlines

Issue	Deadline
September	August 15
December	November 14

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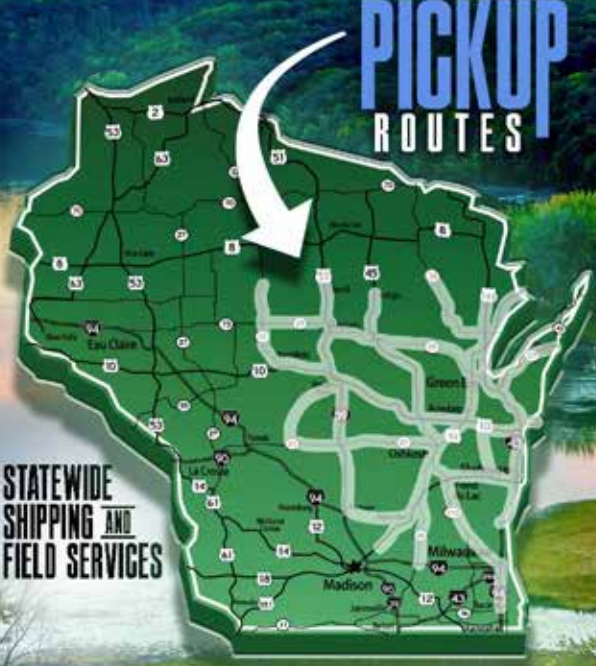
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Chemical addition SOPs – what, how, and why?

By: Jordan Main, WDNR

The basic purpose of a standard operating procedure for phosphorus chemical addition is to describe and formalize the process of chemical addition at a facility. The document should be descriptive, instructive, and reflect the current procedure, meaning it is a living document designed to be updated as facility needs change.

In short, it should describe WHAT and HOW, but why?

From a compliance perspective, documenting a procedure for chemical addition and following it consistently should help a facility maintain phosphorus limit compliance, prevent excess chemical addition and the associated toxicity.

A basic SOP will answer the following questions:

- What chemicals are in use? Manufacturer information and SDS should be included as an appendix.
- Where is chemical added, with what equipment? Flow diagrams are helpful!
- What is the target dosing rate? This is the minimum dosage required for the desired effluent value for limit

compliance. Is there a maximum dosage for when high influent loading is expected? Is the pump set to zero when other treatment processes can reduce the phosphorus sufficiently?

- It is critical that the dosage rates are quantitative, not qualitative.
- How were those values determined? Was pilot testing or jar-testing done? Include those results. Has the facility “dialed-in” a dosage rate over time through trial and error? Describe that process.
- How is dosing adjusted?
- How does the operator decide to adjust the dosing? Is the pump rate controlled by SCADA, using an internal set point? Is the most recent effluent compliance result used to turn the pump up or down? What if precipitation is expected, or influent values are high?

Dosing accuracy (and automation) is only as good as the equipment used to measure it. So, if the valves, lines, or sensors are blocked and stuck, or if a meter needs to be calibrated, overdosing could occur. For any equipment

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complexity level, regular preventative maintenance and visual checks on the entire chemical addition system is critical to prevent overdose and extend its useful life.

What about polymer? Polymer is an additional additive for solids treatment and should always be included in a chemical SOP as it can also contribute to toxicity in the plant or at the outfall if dosed incorrectly.

Do you “set and forget” your chemical addition? This is a red flag that could be pointing toward a chemical overdose. A waste of chemical is a waste of money, and overdose carrying through to the effluent outfall can cause toxicity or unintended impacts to the rest of your treatment train. Ask for help. If you suspect or discover that an overdose of chemical has occurred due to equipment failure or operator error, contact your DNR compliance staff ASAP.

Developing a SOP for chemical addition can help a facility minimize the amount of WET testing in the next permit by protecting against overdose and supporting permit compliance in multiple ways. Develop one today and save yourself time during permit renewal. 🌊

From the WWOA Board of Directors

The April and June issues of the Clarifiers were printed late. For this we apologize but please understand, there were reasons for being late. Anyone who has monitored the Clarifier over the past few years has certainly noticed that the number of pages in each issue has dropped. Five years ago, a typical Clarifier issue was printed with 40 to 44 pages. More recently we struggle to fill 36 pages. The biggest reason for this drop is the lack of content. But that is about to change.

Starting with the September 2025 issue, the WWOA Board of Directors is promoting two new columns to be included in each issue of the Clarifier. The first column is “Ask the DNR” to be led by current Board of Director member Katie Jo Jerzak. The second column is “Ask the Engineer/Operator” to be led by current Clarifier Editor Jon Butt. Both columns will focus on answering emailed questions submitted by WWOA members. Any member can email a question to AskTheClarifier@wwoa.org. If questions are not received, Katie Jo and Jon will prepare information related

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Attention – Immediate opening on the Clarifier staff

Are you looking for a way to serve?

Jon Butt – Editor

After 13 years of extraordinary service, Ron Dickrell has announced that he will be retiring from his position on the Clarifier staff. For those that do not know, Ron has led the effort to select and collect information on the wastewater treatment plant that is featured in every issue of the Clarifier. We all can agree that the featured WWTP is one of the highlights of the Clarifier. Ron conveyed that he loved the camaraderie he developed with colleagues associated with each featured plant. I pressed Ron to make sure that this is what he wants, and he replied that he thinks it is time for some new blood to enjoy the adventures and to continue a relationship with all the people Ron has worked with. Ron is a valued part of the Clarifier and he will be missed.

But with Ron's decision comes an opportunity for another member of WWOA to take on this important role. The Clarifier is seeking a candidate to assume the responsibility of finding a treatment plant to be featured in each issue. Responsibilities include selecting a plant, working with staff to write an article, maintaining records of plants selected,

and coordinating with the editor and the production lead on the article on the cover photo. Ron tells me that he has the featured wwtp identified all the way into 2028, which should make the transition for a new person easy. Ron is not going away and will be available to assist with the transition.

This is a wonderful chance for someone to help support WWOA. Anyone interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact me. 📞

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to important issues facing the regulatory and wastewater communities.

The Board of Directors is excited to offer these new recurring columns in the Clarifier and hope both will help the Board with its mission to educate and inform wastewater professionals. 📞



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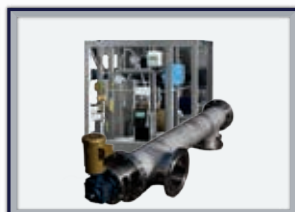
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