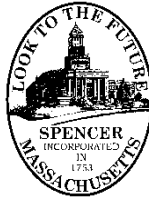


**TOWN OF SPENCER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**OFFICE OF THE**  
**SEWER COMMISSION**

FRANCIS X. WHITE, CHAIRMAN  
LAWRENCE H. DUFAULT, CLERK  
MICHAEL J. MERCADANTE, MEMBER

JAMES T. LAPLANTE JR.  
SUPERINTENDENT



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The Board of Sewer Commissioners and I would like to update the residents of Spencer on the progress we have made with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP).

The Sewer Commissioners, Superintendent James LaPlante, and Wright Pierce Engineering, held several meetings with the E.P.A. and D.E.P. regarding the issuance of our new NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) Permit. We discussed numerous topics including the future wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) effluent discharge permit limits, and high wastewater collection system flows during high groundwater periods and rainfall events. We have been issued a new NPDES permit which is more stringent on the effluent discharge limits on nutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorous, etc.). The WWTP as currently constructed, cannot meet these limit requirements and the influent flow variation from the existing collection system needs to be eliminated to support compliance.

We continually strive to meet current permit levels and in order to remain in compliance with additional requirements, a major technological upgrade to the WWTP and the collections system infrastructure is necessary. We reviewed initial cost estimates for these improvements and the fiscal implications they place on the rate payers. The EPA estimated that a 290% increase in sewer rates would be necessary to meet required upgrade costs. After several meetings between the Commissioners, Wright Pierce Engineering, and the Superintendent, we were able to reduce the projected cost of the project from \$41 million to \$27 million.

The Board of Sewer Commissioners held a public rate hearing and instituted a 38% rate increase to address current fiscal budget, payment of existing debt, capital needs, and the increasing cost for operation and maintenance of aging infrastructure. We recently completed studies which were necessary to qualify for the SRF loans (State Revolving Fund). These low cost loans will provide the opportunity for 0% - 2% interest for the upgrade portion of the project. These steps may also qualify us for potential grant funds for portions of the project

The Board of Sewer Commissioners, the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and Superintendent will continue to work tirelessly in an effort to reduce the costs of these unfunded mandated projects. We will keep you informed of our progress as we navigate our way through the process.

James T. LaPlante Jr.  
Superintendent  
Spencer Wastewater Treatment Plant