



# MWMC Annual Report

Committed to clean water, community health, and the environment

2015



**The Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) protects our local health, safety, and environment by providing high-quality management of wastewater treatment to the Eugene-Springfield community:**



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24 hours a day

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7 days a week

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365 days a year

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## A Strong Partnership

In order to provide the community with exceptional wastewater service, a committed and strong partnership needs to be in place. [Lane County](#) and the cities of [Eugene](#) and [Springfield](#) function collectively to provide the metropolitan area with high-quality wastewater services.

In carrying out the daily activities of managing the regional wastewater system, we strive to achieve and maintain:

1. High environmental standards;
2. Fiscal management that is effective and efficient;
3. A successful intergovernmental partnership;
4. Maximum reliability and useful life of regional assets and infrastructure;
5. Public awareness and understanding of MWMC, the regional wastewater system, and MWMC's objectives of maintaining water quality and a sustainable environment.

# Communicating with Our Customers

We set out to benchmark the community's awareness and understanding of the MWMC, and refine our plan to meet one of the MWMC's annual goals – "Achieve and maintain public awareness and understanding of the MWMC."

The MWMC's FY15 Customer Survey results revealed a low level of awareness of the MWMC and its services. From results of both a phone survey and focus group, the MWMC is largely unknown. However, once people hear what the MWMC does they have a strongly positive opinion about the services we provide.

For more than 30 years, we have quietly provided essential and sustainable wastewater services. With increased water quality regulations expected in the near future, we are focused on raising the awareness of our well-managed wastewater services and the direct connection to local waterways.

We are using the FY15 Customer Survey results to improve our communications to those we serve, and to the broader community and region. We are supporting this effort with the continuation of tours and Clean Water University. Plus new efforts such as sponsorships of the [Eugene Water & Electric Board's Run to Stay Warm](#) and the [Lane County Fair](#) and the creation and launch of the MWMC's video series on our new [YouTube Channel](#). Check them out on the next page!

**[View the entire updated MWMC Communications Plan.](#)**



**Scan the QR Code to  
learn more about tours  
or email us at  
[MWMCPartners](#)**

# MWMC Video Series



## **Pollution Prevention**

Keeping chemicals and toxins, medications, trash, and other materials considered pollutants out of our drains is important to the health of our local waterways. Find out what you can do to help!



## **Wastewater Treatment**

Did you know when you use water, you dirty it? Used water, or wastewater, must be cleaned before it's returned to the environment. Learn how the MWMC cleans wastewater for the Eugene-Springfield metro area.



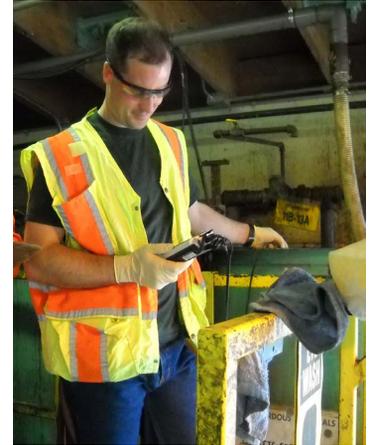
## **Sustainability**

The MWMC provides effective wastewater treatment services for the Eugene-Springfield metro area. Learn more about how we clean water with a focus on sustainable practices.

# Pretreatment Compliance Audit

The [MWMC's pretreatment program](#) is designed to reduce the level of potentially toxic pollutants and other non-domestic wastewater sources into the wastewater system. This program reduces the amount of pollutants released to the environment, and protects worker safety, the wastewater treatment plant operations, the MWMC's biosolids and water quality.

In April, the [Oregon Department of Environmental Quality](#) (OR-DEQ) conducted a three-day audit of Eugene and Springfield's industrial pretreatment programs to assess overall compliance with regulatory requirements and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation.



The audit consisted of the following evaluations:

- MWMC's legal authority
- Development and implementation of the MWMC's Local Limit
- MWMC's resources to implement the Pretreatment Program in the service area
- Implementation policies and templates developed by MWMC
- Review and evaluation of Pretreatment activities and records maintained by the cities of [Eugene](#) and the [Springfield](#), for the permitted Significant Industrial Users (SIUs)
- Site visit of the [MWMC's Wastewater Pollution Control Facility](#)
- Site inspections of selected SIUs in the service area
- Discussion of the Pretreatment regulation and implementation

Overall MWMC received high marks and was identified as being one of the top programs across the United States.

**[Learn more about both Eugene and Springfield's Pretreatment programs.](#)**



# Temperature Reduction Strategies

We're embarking on the third phase of the Thermal Load Mitigation Pre-Implementation project that will help reduce the temperature impacts on the Willamette River generated through wastewater treatment processes as part of the [Total Maximum Daily Load](#) allowed. The MWMC is taking a proactive approach in planning for future regulatory temperature requirements by studying potential thermal load mitigation options. Phase 3 will accomplish two goals; identify a path forward for permit compliance in regards to temperature impacts and long-term comprehensive facility planning considerations. The full study is scheduled to be completed in 2016. Some Phase 3 Study elements:

- MWMC Storage and Irrigation Plan: the study will recommend a strategy for diverting effluent from the river during high-temperature impact conditions into the MWMC's lagoons at the [Biosolids Management Facility](#) and [Beneficial Reuse Site](#). Stored water can be managed to augment irrigation at the [Biocycle Farm](#) to enhance poplar tree growth and to increase crop production at the Beneficial Reuse Site.
- [McKenzie Voluntary Incentives Program \(VIP\) Partnership](#): the study will evaluate best collaboration strategies with Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) and other partners to optimize outcomes for riparian restoration in the McKenzie watershed.
- Treatment Plant Heat Management Plan: the study will further evaluate heat loads at the wastewater treatment plant and identify opportunities to reduce, recover, and reuse heat.

**[Read more about how the MWMC is helping with water quality efforts for both the Willamette and McKenzie rivers.](#)**



**[Prevention Tips you can do at home!](#)**

# Biocycle Farm - Exciting Prospects

The MWMC hit a major milestone in 2015 after completing the last harvest of our very first planting of hybrid poplar trees. This rotation, grown on the 156 acres referred to as “Management Unit 1,” was initially planted in 2004 and comprised seven different varieties of poplars. We first started harvesting the trees in 2013 and have been experimenting with best harvest techniques and end-use markets for this sustainably-grown biomass (i.e. the tree’s wood and fiber). Our goal is to balance our biosolids and recycled water management needs with growing trees for the best market potential.

This is where it gets exciting. In October 2015, the MWMC collaborated with the [Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies](#) (ACWA) and [Advanced Hardwood Biofuels Northwest](#) (AHB) to pull together poplar growers, users, and researchers in a one-day workshop to identify mutual opportunities. In the near-term, recently-emerged markets for poplar as an important plywood veneer source appear to be ready. In fact, small batches of poplar from the Biocycle Farm were made into veneer and plywood in 2014 and 2015 to test the prospect.



Last photo in slideshow taken by David N. Jones

# Biocycle Farm - New Poplar Trees

More exciting news for the [Biocycle Farm](#)! New poplar trees will be setting root in 2016 as the MWMC re-plants the first 156-acre unit of harvested trees. At an average spacing of 222 trees per acre, approximately 35,000 new trees will start growing where trees were harvested in 2013, 2014, and 2015. This event represents an exciting time for the MWMC as we are starting to learn about end uses for harvested poplar and emerging best practices for poplar farm management.

The Biocycle Farm hosts nearly 400 acres of trees in three different aged stands. These stands (or “rotations”) are grown out for 10 to 12 years before harvest. Rapidly growing hybrid poplars are renowned for their high capacity to uptake nutrients and water – an important asset for managing the MWMC’s biosolids program – as well as to absorb and help break down trace chemicals and metals.



This is why poplars are used across the country for wastewater treatment, brownfield redevelopment, and agricultural land buffers. Poplars are being tapped for exciting new uses too – the foremost of those being bioethanol that can replace petroleum fuels. Meanwhile, the MWMC is finding great uses for poplar locally.

The MWMC saw increasing market value per acre with each successive harvest over the last three years, due to a combination of extra tree volume with each year of additional growth and better market prices as the MWMC’s poplar became a better known commodity. Regional staff is collaborating with new wood products interests that could add to the market value of Biocycle Farm poplar.

The Biocycle Farm continues to be a natural treatment tool that offers a growing array of environmental benefits.

**[Check out the history of the Biocycle Farm,](#)**  
**[watch our Harvest Pictorial Video, and more!](#)**

# New Digester Coming Online

As identified in the [MWMC 2004 Facilities Plan](#), the design for a fourth anaerobic digester is underway. The MWMC has three existing anaerobic digesters each with a capacity of 1 million gallons. The fourth digester, once constructed, will provide needed capacity for future operations to meet demands of treating wastewater for our growing community. The bidding phase for the digester construction is anticipated in early 2017.

In conjunction with the construction of a fourth digester, the on-site existing lagoon will be decommissioned. This will occur as the lagoon was constructed primarily as a temporary facility to provide biosolids storage capacity and support digester cleaning operations. The MWMC plans to change the method of digester cleaning which will accommodate removal of the on-site temporary lagoon.

**[Read more about the MWMC Capital Improvement Projects.](#)**



# Your Commission

Local representatives from each of the regional partners of the City of Eugene, the City of Springfield and Lane County serve on the Commission. Each partner has representation to reflect their proportional number of customers. The City of Springfield and Lane County each has an elected official and a citizen representative. The City of Eugene has an elected official and two citizen representatives.

The Commission provides oversight to the facilities and guidance to staff, establishes policies, sets goals and regional wastewater rates, oversees the facilities budget, approves capital projects, and grant contracts to consultants and construction companies. The Commission meets at 7:30 am on the second Friday of each month.

**[Interested in attending a meeting?](#)**  
**[View monthly meeting details and agendas here.](#)**

## Commission Members with Years of Service

Bill Inge - Lane County Citizen - 16 years  
 Doug Keeler - Springfield Citizen - 18 years  
 Hilary Loud - Eugene Citizen - 10 years  
 Walt Meyer - Eugene Citizen - 15 years

George Brown - Eugene City Council - 5 years  
 Joe Pishioneri - Springfield City Council - 1 year  
 Faye Stewart - Lane County Commission - 9 years



# Fiscal Management

Everyone one of us uses water. Whether we're doing the dishes or flushing the toilet, we need water throughout our daily lives. Used water or 'wastewater' must be cleaned before being returned to the Willamette River.

If you use the regional system, your wastewater user fees support the regional wastewater program's purpose of protecting our community's health and local environment including the Willamette River. Regional wastewater fees provide necessary funding to operate and maintain existing wastewater treatment facilities and fulfill capital improvement projects that help meet new, more stringent, regulatory requirements.

**[Complete audited financial statements available here.](#)**

## Contact Information:

### Operations -

Wastewater Pollution Control Facility,  
Biosolids Management Facility, and  
Reuse Facility

City of Eugene  
Public Works, Wastewater Division  
410 River Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97404  
541.682.8600  
eugene-or.gov

### Administration -

Regional Wastewater System and  
Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission

City of Springfield  
Development and Public Works Department  
225 Fifth Street  
Springfield, OR 97477  
541.726.3694  
springfield-or.gov

## **Questions? Email us at MWMCPartners**

Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission



*partners in wastewater management*