



NEWS

N o r t h e a s t W a s t e w a t e r N e w s

NEws is brought to you by the Philadelphia Water Department for our neighbors in Bridesburg, where one of our three water pollution control plants is located. Our two other water pollution control plants are in South and Southwest Philadelphia. NEws provides you with information about what is happening at the Northeast water pollution control plant located at 3895-3899 Richmond Street.

Season's Greetings

It's that time of year again, and the employees at the Northeast Plant would like to extend warm holiday greetings to all of our neighbors here in the Bridesburg area. In this edition of the NEws, we would like to take a look back at the Year 2002 and give you an update on the activities at the Northeast Plant.

The Northeast Plant Takes Top Honors for High Standards in Wastewater Treatment

The Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA) awarded the Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant's employees, in the Bridesburg section of the city, with its most prestigious award, the Platinum award for environmental excellence, for the calendar year ending in 2001. Philadelphia's Water Commissioner Kumar Kishinchand presented the AMSA Platinum Award to Robert Lenzinski, manager of the Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant, at a ceremony held on June 26, 2002.

Platinum awards recognize wastewater treatment plant employees who have achieved Gold Awards for five consecutive years. Gold Awards are given to treatment plants that have achieved 100 percent environmental regulatory compliance for an entire calendar year. The facilities' outstanding performance earned them five Gold Awards from 1997 to 2001. The Northeast Plant is one of 14 wastewater treatment plants in the nation to receive a Platinum Award for calendar year 2001, a noteworthy distinction indeed. In fact, the Northeast Plant employees are on target for another award for the calendar year 2002.

The Northeast Plant employees treat wastewater for North and Northeast Philadelphia as well as parts of Bucks and Montgomery counties. With a staff of 130 people, the Northeast Plant treated an average of 188.12 million gallons of wastewater per day between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 and is the largest wastewater treatment plant in Philadelphia.

AMSA is a nationally recognized leader in environmental policy and is involved in all facets of water quality protection. Member agencies serve the majority of the sewered population in the United States. Collectively, they treat and reclaim more than 18 billion gallons of wastewater each day. More than 300 public wastewater agencies are AMSA members.



Philadelphia Water Commissioner Kumar Kishinchand (center) and Chief of Wastewater Treatment Debra McCarty (right) presented the Platinum Peak Performance Award from the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies to the manager of the Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant Robert Lenzinski (left) amidst NE plant employees, in a ceremony held on June 26, 2002.

Wally Wise Guy Says: Shelter In-Place!

The Philadelphia Water Department's Public Relations staff is involved with the city's Shelter In-Place program. We have assisted in the design of a brochure for the program that is available in English and Spanish. We have also overseen the production of a 30-second public service announcement featuring Wally Wise Guy for local television.

The Bridesburg community is leading the way in this citywide program. The Shelter In-Place program was kicked off this past April at a City Council ceremony proclaiming Shelter In-Place Week in Philadelphia. The Fire Department's Fire Prevention Unit also conducted drills in Bridesburg's public and parochial schools.



This Shelter In-Place program features the new mascot, Wally Wise Guy (see diagram). Wally is a turtle who does the right thing; he shelters in his shell in the event of a hazardous chemical release, which is the message we want to communicate to the public. For more information about the city's Shelter In-Place program, call the Philadelphia Local Emergency Planning Committee (PLEPC) at 215-686-1141.

More Makeovers for The Northeast Plant!

The Northeast Plant is continuing its efforts towards greater efficiency and odor control. As part of the Plant's facility improvement plans, there is a program in place to renew or replace equipment that is approaching the end of its useful life.

As part of our ongoing efforts to maintain the infrastructure at our plants, we are in the process of rehabilitating the final sedimentation tanks. The purpose of the final sedimentation tanks is to allow the materials that are heavier than water to settle and be removed. After the materials settle to the bottom of the tank, the treated wastewater is dosed with chlorine to kill disease-causing organisms and is then safely discharged into the Delaware River. We have a total of 16 tanks and have rehabilitated 12 to date. The remaining four will be completed by the end of next year.

Reducing Risk

Chlorine is important to the wastewater treatment process because it removes harmful bacteria and impurities from the water. The Water Department is constantly reviewing new technology that is efficient and safe to use. We are replacing our existing chlorine facility with a sodium hypochlorite

system. Sodium hypochlorite serves the same purpose as chlorine, but is a safer alternative. The new system will replace the chlorine system that is currently in use for disinfecting the plant effluent, which is the cleaned water that is discharged back into the Delaware River. This project is expected to be completed in the spring of 2003.

Cogeneration = Efficient Recycling of Resources

A cogeneration system is a highly-efficient power plant that uses gas which is produced as part of the sludge digestion process to produce two useful forms of energy – heat and electricity.

The fuel for the cogeneration system is digester gas currently produced as a by-product of the wastewater treatment process. This gas is being used as fuel for boilers and heating equipment throughout the Northeast Plant; the remainder of the gas or what cannot be used is flared off. The cogeneration system is designed to use up to 90 percent of the methane gas not used by the boilers.

The cogeneration system has been online since May of 1993. The primary purposes of the cogeneration facility are the efficient use of digester gas and the reduction of the power costs for the Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant. Another benefit is that the facility can provide backup power to the Northeast Plant in the unlikely event that electrical feed lines fail.

New Testing for Odor Control

The Northeast Plant continues to test different harmless chemicals to mitigate odors. Trial runs are necessary to judge the effectiveness of a particular chemical. There are many factors that need to be considered when making the ultimate selection.

Potassium permanganate is one of the chemicals we are considering in our efforts towards odor control. Potassium permanganate is a strong oxidant with a long history of safe use in drinking water, wastewater, and chemical manufacturing industries. In the wastewater field, it is used to oxidize hydrogen sulfide and other sulfide compounds, prevent corrosion, destroy toxic pollutants, control and remove grease, and for sludge odor control.

Community Relations

We would like to encourage our neighbors to continue to report odors to us so that we can be proactive in our efforts to reduce odors. Our employees tour the perimeter of the plant on a regular basis to see if they detect odors, but odors may travel from the plant into the community and we may not be aware of it. We want to be good neighbors but we need your help. We want to hear from you. When you report an odor to us directly, we can investigate and respond faster.

To report odors, please call us:

- Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 215-685-1312 or 1313.
- After business hours at 215-685-6300.