

# Mount Airy asks to hook in to Pocono Township sewer system

## Added capacity from casino-hotel could lower rates for other users

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Mount Airy Casino Resort wants to connect to Pocono Township's new central sewer system.

The move is significant because another large-scale user could lower the rates paid by small residential and commercial customers by bringing more revenue into the project.

Expected rates for small customers using one equivalent dwelling unit each are projected at \$1,250. It will cost thousands more to connect into the main sewer lines along the Route 611 corridor.

"At this time we have concluded that we want to connect to your system," Mount Airy attorney Jeffrey Belardi wrote June 6 to Pocono Township Supervisors Chairman Frank Hess. "Please consider this letter as Mount Airy's formal request for connection."

The township received the letter Tuesday.

Mount Airy requested about a year ago that the township "insert a place-holder" for the casino's potential participation. The casino could have reserved that usage for a future date by paying a reservation fee equivalent to about 60 percent of the fee charged to current users.

"Since that time we have remained relatively quiet but I assure you that we have evaluated the general concept," Belardi wrote.

Hess expressed concern at a township sewer committee meeting Tuesday that the township was falling short of original usage projections, meaning remaining customers would have to foot larger bills.

The sewage is being sent to the Stroudsburg treatment plant operated by the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority, where Pocono Township has a capacity of 2 million gallons per day. Stroudsburg and Stroud Township also use the treatment plant.

Users from Pocono Township and the Sanofi vaccine manufacturing plant in Swiftwater were originally expected to generate a combined 900,000 gallons of daily treatment capacity. But that estimate has been reduced to 500,000 gallons.

Mount Airy's participation will add 300,000 gallons to the system. The planned Kalahari water park resort on Pocono Manor property in Tobyhanna Township will provide an additional 400,000 gallons per day of sewage for Pocono Township's treatment capacity. Other potential major users could help generate 1.5 million gallons per day toward the township's 2 million gallon capacity, Hess said. More usage means lower rates in the long run.

"That's why these other projects are so important," Hess said.

Belardi requested a meeting between Mount Airy and Pocono Township to go over details of connecting to the township lines.