

Stroudsburg sewer plant: Bigger, better, less smelly

Upgraded facility will double capacity, produce cleaner discharge without chemicals, and allow nearby residents to breathe easier

By [Christina Tatu](#)

Pocono Record Writer

April 26, 2013 12:00 AM

Able to process twice the sewage, better for the environment and far less stinky — Stroudsburg's new and improved wastewater treatment facility is expected to be fully operational by July.

The old treatment facility was designed to treat up to 2.5 million gallons per day, but couldn't effectively handle more than 1.8 million.

The new plant will be able to handle up to 4.5 million gallons per day of sewage from Stroudsburg, Stroud and Pocono townships, said Ken Brown, manager of the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority.

A new ultraviolet light and cloth filtering system will do away with the need for harsh chemicals like chlorine, and covered treatment tanks mean offensive odors are far less likely to be released into the downtown area.

"This is a big deal. People take for granted water and sewer projects and the fact that you flush your toilet every day and have fresh water," Brown said.

Allows growth

The new system will allow the connecting municipalities the opportunity for further business growth because now they have a larger, more reliable system to hook up to, Brown said.

The new plant and regional agreement have been in the works since 2008.

Actual construction was started in March 2011, when the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority took ownership of the plant from Stroudsburg and Stroud Township.

Each municipality is responsible for its cost of connecting to the system.

Stroudsburg and Stroud Township connected in December, and Pocono Township needs to finish testing its collection equipment before it can connect to the system.

Pocono is expected to be connected by the end of June, Brown said.

The new system will allow for the closure of smaller, inefficient sewer systems located throughout the area, Brown said.

For example, The Crossings Premium Outlets in Tannersville has its own small sewer plant.

There are also about four other strip mall operations in the area that have their own sewage systems, he said.

Cleaner water, no smell

The original Stroudsburg plant dates back to 1938 and underwent three renovations, the last one undertaken in 1988.

The old system used two uncovered treatment tanks, which during certain times of day and under certain conditions would release an offensive smell into the area.

With the new system, all the wastewater is collected in one main collection tank. The water then goes through a filtering system that removes any rags and grit, Brown said.

The water is then aerated and pumped into an equalization basin, which is a giant holding tank where the water will stay until it is ready to be pumped into one of the system's "sequencing batch reactors."

Once inside a reactor, the water is aerated again, until the additional waste settles to the bottom and the clean water can be taken off the top by a special pipe.

The clean water then goes through another clarifying process prior to being filtered through cloth to catch small debris, and being treated with ultraviolet lights to kill remaining bacteria.

With this new process, the water quality of treated water released into McMichael Creek will be greatly improved, Brown said.

Domes were placed on top of the facility's two former treatment tanks. Those tanks are now going to be converted to sludge treatment facilities.

Brown hopes to bring attention to the new system in the authority's annual newsletter, which should be sent to residents in mid-May.

This year, the letter will be printed on glossy, high-quality paper with color images to highlight the project.

AT A GLANCE

- Total cost: \$37 million in construction fees and about \$3 million in legal, engineering and design fees.
- New system can handle up to 4.5 million gallons of sewage per day, more than double the old system.
- Will service more than 5,000 billing units, including 950 businesses and more than 4,000 residential units. Figures don't include Kalahari Resorts' water park complex proposed for Tobyhanna Township.