



What Is The MWPP Program?



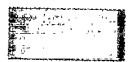
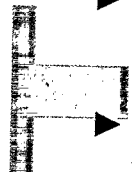
MWPP PROGRAM BENEFITS

In addition to providing cleaner water for everyone, the Municipal Water Pollution Prevention (MWPP) program benefits all levels of government concerned about water quality.



For States:

- ▶ Prevents NPDES permit violations through better facility management and regulation.
- ▶ Maintains high POTW compliance rates and maximizes design lives of POTWs through regular assessments.
- ▶ Conserves State resources in undertaking of timely and costly enforcement actions.



"Through this program and by working with the municipalities, States save resources by not having to take costly enforcement actions."



For EPA:

- ▶ Places decision making at the local levels, yet supports the national mandate to preserve the clean water infrastructure.
- ▶ Emphasizes EPA's priority for focusing on pollution prevention activities.



"MWPP is successful because it keeps decision making and planning at the local level, where it can best be done, and it helps achieve sustained compliance rates for municipal facilities."



What is the MWPP Program?

the Municipal Water Pollution Prevention (MWPP) program is a voluntary and cooperative effort by EPA, State governments, and municipalities to:

- ▶ *Prevent NPDES permit violations and maintain high compliance rates by publicly owned treatment works (POTWs).*
- ▶ *Maximize the design lives of POTWs through effective operation and maintenance, and controlled wastewater flows and loadings.*
- ▶ *Ensure effective and timely planning and financing for future needs and growth, before permit violations occur.*

Why have a MWPP Program?

Large capital investments, supported by effective enforcement activities, have been successful in ensuring that 90 percent of the nation's POTWs have constructed treatment facilities that are capable of meeting applicable NPDES permit limits.

Nevertheless, there is a growing concern that the phase-out of federal construction grants, continuing municipal growth, and the emergence of new pollutants will put increased demands on those compliance capabilities.

In order to manage POTWs and to ensure sustained compliance and proper planning for future capacity needs, States should begin to consider the creation of a MWPP program. Now is the time for States to begin developing an effective management approach that will address these critical concerns before capacity and compliance problems arise.

Components of a MWPP Program

Currently, there is no nationally mandated MWPP program. Nevertheless, each NPDES State has flexibility of approach for designing an effective program that best defines its particular needs. States may determine the appropriate components needed for such a program. The following components provide a solid foundation for development of a successful program:

▶ **Early Warning System**

This is a regular assessment of the operational and physical capabilities of wastewater treatment facilities accomplished by using a variety of critical indicators (e.g., effluent quality, flows and loadings, sludge storage and disposal capacity, operating capacity, etc.) to identify potential problems.

► **Reporting Mechanism**

This establishes an appropriate method for routine and formal submission of data documenting the information from the early warning system assessments.

► **Preventive Action**

The POTWs owner/operators assume responsibility for implementing measures to address problems identified by the early warning system. The State should review and approve of such measures prior to their initiation.

► **Management Tracking**

This means a system to track information across all POTWs concerning treatment plant capabilities and compliance status, as well as to warn of potential problems.

► **Program Evaluation**

A system to determine whether program objectives are being met and if there is a need for program revisions.

Your State may already have

some of these elements in

place. The MWPP program

provides the opportunity

to integrate existing

program activities into a

comprehensive approach

for managing POTWs.

How to get Started

The fundamental concept of a MWPP program is flexibility. EPA encourages design of programs that best meet States' own needs and priorities. A major obstacle in implementing an MWPP program may be overcoming the public perception that wastewater treatment is a costly and messy problem. To overcome this obstacle and ensure the success of a MWPP program, States should begin working now to change the public attitude regarding municipal wastewater treatment needs.

As a starting point, States might consider a two-step beginning.

STEP ONE

Assess the Current Program

Determine whether or not present activities encourage POTWs to remain in compliance with NPDES permits.

Search for ways to improve POTW compliance.

Decide on the appropriate program components for the State.

Consider what statutory or regulatory changes are needed.

STEP TWO

Develop Public Outreach

Introduce municipalities and the public to program concepts through public meetings and/or workshops.

Develop advisory committees consisting of State and local elected officials, treatment facility owner/operators, environmental groups, and public citizens.

Discuss a workable timetable for implementing the MWPP program.

For Municipalities:

- ▶ Provides plant operators with a powerful management tool for diagnosing emerging problems and designing actions to deal with them.
- ▶ Avoids possible penalties and fines that result from noncompliance.
- ▶ Promotes effective and timely planning for future economic growth and related waste treatment needs.
- ▶ Builds coalitions for acquiring public support for plant expansions and adequate user fees.

“A new line of valuable communication is created between the operator who understands the wastewater treatment system and the elected officials who appropriate the money for ongoing improvements.”

How to Obtain Further Information about the MWPP Program

Contact the MWPP Program Coordinator at the EPA Regional Office or your State for further information about the MWPP Program, including EPA's policy and guidance manual for MWPP program implementation.

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