



CONFLUENCE

www.cwwuc.org

4th Quarter - 2007

CAN WE AFFORD IT?

A question routinely asked in day to day living is becoming more commonly asked with regard to clean water (aka, wastewater treatment) charges. The 'cost of clean' is rising at an average of 6% to 8% annually across the nation; driven by a variety of factors. Rising energy costs, increasingly stringent water quality standards and regulations, eliminating CSOs and SSOs, anti-degradation requirements, TMDLs and more are increasing the cost of wastewater treatment. In the not too distant future, dealing with endocrine disrupting compounds, nutrients and carbon footprints may accelerate increases in the cost of clean water.

Ask yourself "How much CAN I afford"? You will probably not arrive at a clear cut number. The beginning of an answer may be gleaned from the CDPH&E *Intended Use Plan* for the State's Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund (WPCRF). Points to prioritize loan applications are awarded in several categories, including ability to pay.

Zero points are awarded if your annual treatment charge is less than 1% of median household income (MHI) in your service area. Presumably, this means up to 1% is quite affordable. In a hypothetical Colorado service area, MHI is about \$50,000. An affordable rate would be considered to be about \$42 per month. At the present time, the monthly charge is averaging \$15 per month.

One city in the area has a MHI of \$35,000 which translates to an affordable charge of \$30 per month, still below the current charge. An affluent city (by no means the most affluent in this hypothetical service area) has an MHI of \$112,000, meaning they could afford almost \$95 per month!

Ask the question again. At least for one service area, the *affordable* charge has been narrowed down to \$30 to \$95 per month, according to CDPH&E. But wait, the scoring for ability to pay goes up to 3% of MHI, possibly meaning an acceptable rate might be up to \$90 to \$285.

Perhaps the question remains - Can you afford it? More on this in future newsletters.



CWWUC Calendar

Stay Tuned In - Stay Informed

The CWWUC meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Littleton/Englewood WWTP, located at 2900 S. Platte River Drive, Englewood, CO. Please visit our website for a map and driving directions.

October 10

This month's meeting will be held at the new Colorado Springs J.D. Phillips Water Reclamation Facility.



It was built to handle increasing wastewater flows in the Monument Creek Basin and is located on 30.8 acres near Pikeview Reservoir, at Garden of the Gods Road and Mark Dabling Boulevard. The plant is fully enclosed and features state-of-the-art odor control.

The meeting will begin at 11:30 with a *reserved* lunch at the Mesa Conservation Facility at 2855 Mesa Road, Colorado Springs (You can get directions online at www.mapquest.com). Questions can be directed to Ginny Johnson at 719 668-4375.

November 14

The November Council meeting will include a tour of a brand new, out of the box, nitrate removal facility at the Littleton/Englewood WWTP. The system is based on water plant filtration as a fixed film reactor with the addition of methanol as food. The tour will begin at 12:00 o'clock noon with lunch and a brief overview of the system. After lunch

there will be a walk through the 'denite' facility and the methanol storage/feed area, returning to the meeting around 1:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Page Parker, 303.762.2641 or pparker@englewoodgov.org by November 9.

Also on this month's agenda is Steve Gunderson, Director of the Colorado Water Quality Control Division. Steve brings his semi-annual update on the activities, policies and changes in the Division which have occurred during the last six months.

December 12



Steve Canton will provide an update on the nutrient evaluation GEI has done of the Division's efforts on potential nutrient criteria for lakes and reservoirs. He will address the Division's ideas of translators to convert in-lake chlorophyll A targets/standards to in-lake total phosphorus and eventually phosphorus loads.

He will also provide a summary of their selenium studies which have been done previously for the Council. These studies include an evaluation of fish population responses vs. fish tissue thresholds. It also includes refinement of EPA fish tissue-to-tissue models used to calculate whole-body Se thresholds from studies where selenium was only measured in specific organs.



Forum Corner

The Colorado Water Quality Forum workgroups provide an opportunity for an ongoing informal dialogue among diverse parties of stakeholders' interests in water quality management. Participants include water suppliers, industrial and municipal dischargers, environmental groups and federal, state and local agencies.

Each quarter *Forum Corner* provides a brief status of some of the active workgroups. It is not meant to be a detailed update. For more information go to the Forum Website at <http://www.cwqf.org> and click on Workgroup Links.

Agricultural Diversions – This workgroup is exploring issues related to oil and gas exploration water which impacts agriculture. The group is accepting comments on their 2nd draft guidance document and plan to utilize it in permitting in the near future. Check out the website for more information. Facilitated by Gary Beers CDPH&E, 303.692.3524, gary.beers@state.co.us and coordinated by Landon Gates, Colorado Farm Bureau, 303.749.7516, lgates@colofb.com.

Spill Reporting – Go to the Website for the latest draft Guidance for *Reporting Spills under the Colorado Water Quality Control Act and Colorado Discharge Permits*. If interested in this important issue contact Dave Akers, Facilitator, 303.692.3591 Dave.Akers@state.co.us or the Coordinator Dave Meyers, City of Westminster, 303.430.2400 x2376 dmeyer@ci.westminster.co.us.

Aquatic Life – Contact the Facilitator, Christopher Theel CDPH&E, for the latest information on the progress of *Expected Condition*. Call Chris at 303.692.3558 or email him at Christopher.Theel@state.co.us for updates.

Nutrient Criteria – Watch the website for times and dates. The next meeting is

currently scheduled for October 23 at 10:00 in the new C building at the CDPH&E! This is going to be an important Workgroup to be involved in. Keep an eye on the website and stay informed. We all have a stake in this one whether it's lakes and reservoirs or rivers and streams. These regulations will have a large impact. Make your voice heard! **Co-Chair Rivers and Streams** Blake Beyea, Water Quality Control Division 303.692.3656 Blake.Beyea@state.co.us [Lakes and Reservoirs](#)

Jim Saunders, Water Quality Control Division, **Co-Chair Lakes and Reservoirs**, Jim.Saunders@state.co.us
Coordinator, Mary Fabisiak, City of Westminster, mfabisiak@ci.westminster.co.us 303.430.2400 ext. 2187

Regulation 61 – This Workgroup has been discussing issues and concerns regarding CDPS permits and permit implementation. The Workgroup is almost completed with the list of issues. Janet Keiler is the facilitator, CDPH&E 303.692.3599 Janet.kieler@state.co.us or Carol Webb the Coordinator, City of Fort Collins 970.221.6231 cwebb@fcgov.com. To view the issues List 2007 go to the Water Quality Forum website and click on the link. Also watch the Commission's website for the draft document.

Membrane Treatment – As more utilities look toward advanced treatment to ensure safe drinking water, the need for exploring the issues associated with disposal of waste streams from these systems has become critical. Contact Dave Akers CDPH&E 303.692.3591 dave.akers@state.co.us or Laurie Rink, FRICO, 303.777.0188 lrink@uos.net to find out more about this group and how to join in the discussions.

Standards Framework – A new Workgroup was developed to begin discussing possible issues for the 2010 Basic Standards hearing. Paul Frohardt of the Water Quality Control Commission is the Chair; 303.692.3468 paul.frohardt@state.co.us and Amy Woodis of the Metro Wastewater Reclamation District is the Coordinator; 303.286.3240 awoodis@mwrdd.dst.co.us. Contact either of

them with questions or possible issues for discussion.

E. Coli—Another new workgroup formed to discuss: Bacteria Pellston Workshop, Empact Beach Project, EPA Decision chart, EPA Microbial Source Tracking Document and Research subgroup TMDL Components—to name a few. Contact Becky Anthony, Chair at 303.692.3339 rebecca.anthony@state.co.us or Coordinator James McCarthy at jim-m@arvada.org



NEW OFFICERS FOR 2007-2008

At the September meeting, during the CWWUC breakfast at the RMWEA conference in Keystone, a new board of officers was elected. Your new Officers/Directors for 2007-2008 are:

Chair-Paul Grundemann, Centennial WSD
Vice Chair-Amy Woodis, MWRD
Secretary-Bret Linenfelser, City of Boulder
Treasurer-Blair Corning, South Adams County WSD
Director-Tim Grotheer, Plum Creek Wastewater Authority
Nancy Keller-City of Pueblo

ANOTHER GREAT SHOWING BY THE CWWUC AT THE ANNUAL RMWEA CONFERENCE

The RMWEA/RMSAWWA Annual Conference held September 9th -12th, 2007 in Keystone, Colorado saw great attendance and representation by members of the Colorado Wastewater Utility Council.

Council members were seen participating in many of the Conference's exciting and informative events. Members who undertook the bike ride or golf tournament were still able to muster the strength to network with other

industry professionals and catch up with old friends at the Meet and Greet on Sunday night.

Monday began the technical sessions which featured informative leading edge topics such as "Alternatives Analysis for Antidegradation Based Permit Standards", "Eyes in the Sewer", and "The Care and Feeding of Policy-makers." The Council's own Dennis Stowe presented a session on Wednesday afternoon which highlighted the benefits of the Colorado Water and Wastewater Mentoring Program. This session was well-attended and hopefully spurs Dennis to sign up as a "public speaking" mentor in the future.

Other CWWUC highlights included the victory by Council member Paul Grundeman's team - The Grease Balls and a Fryer - in the prestigious Toilet Bowl. This event was held on Monday in the vendor area. Paul's squad didn't seem to be slowed down by the wide variety of difficult questions taken from the infamous "Book."

Tuesday was the annual CWWUC Business meeting and breakfast. This year's breakfast setting was much warmer than the "Breakfast Freeze of 2006". During the meeting, brief status reports on relevant regulatory topics were presented by Council members. New officers were also elected by Council membership.

Another CWWUC feature at this year's Conference was the information booth manned



by Council Executive Director Paul Ferraro. The booth displayed photos of the Council's activities and offered information to visitors

about CWWUC membership, mentoring, and the organization's mission. The RMWEA Conference was a great place to exhibit this information because the two organizations have many members and goals in common.



The session closed on Wednesday after a mock Blues Brothers style Funeral for the outgoing RMWEA President at the Joint Banquet on Tuesday evening. Some members stayed for the EPA-sponsored Asset Management Workshop. Others returned to their workplace with a backpack full of information and new found inspiration to continue striving to be the best water stewards possible.



Update from the Colorado Water and Wastewater Mentoring Program

- The Colorado Water Quality Control Division, Drinking Program is financially supporting the implementation of the water portion of the Colorado Water and Wastewater Mentoring Program.
- The Mentoring Program is submitting a Proposal to the Operators Certification Board requesting that training units be given to mentors and mentees who participate in the Colorado Water and Wastewater Mentoring Program - Peer-to-

Peer Mentoring. Stay tuned for the results!



Goodbye and Good Luck to Claudia Cummins who has been a contributor to the Council for many years. Claudia has decided to retire early from her career in Wastewater to be a full time Chief Cook and Bottle Washer, at home. We'll miss you Claudia.



Miss a Recent CWWUC Meeting?

You can access the minutes of our current meetings via our website. www.cwwuc.org

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The newsletter of Colorado Wastewater Utility Council is published four times a year in January, April, July, & October.

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