

Legislative Water Commission

Wastewater Infrastructure

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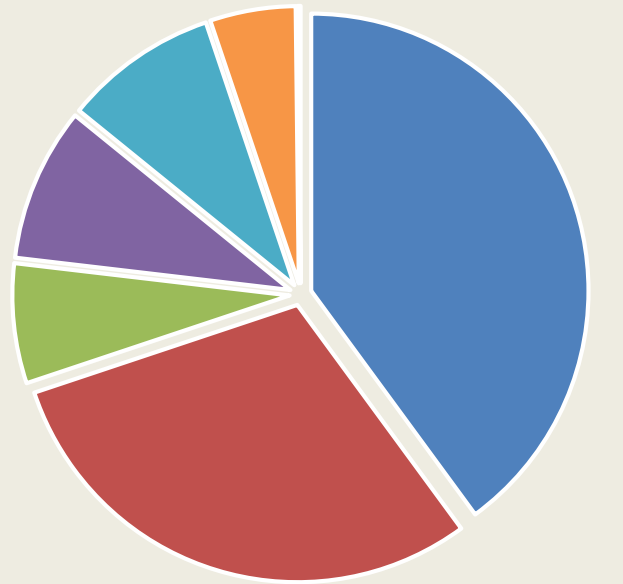
Federal Clean Water Act 1972

- ❑ Included construction grants program
- ❑ Provided up to 90% grants
- ❑ 10% locally funded
- ❑ Phased out in mid-1980's
- ❑ Now 100% loan funded



Minnesota's Wastewater Infrastructure Challenge

2016 Wastewater Infrastructure Needs



■ Sewer System Rehab ■ Secondary Treatment
■ Infiltration/Inflow ■ New collection
■ New Interceptors ■ Advanced Treatment

- \$4.2 billion over the next 20 years
- 47% to replace basic wastewater pipe infrastructure
- 30% to replace basic plant infrastructure
- 18% for new growth
- 5% for new standards



Wastewater Infrastructure Challenge: Age of Collection Sewers

- ❑ Sewers that are >50 years old
 - Considered “beyond useful life”
 - Do not perform at current engineering standards

- ❑ Minnesota sewer systems at 50+ years old:
 - 83% of the Minneapolis and St. Paul system
 - 17% of systems in suburban metro communities
 - 30% of systems in Greater Minnesota



Wastewater Infrastructure: Age of collection sewers

City	% pipes >50	# miles >50
Crosby	85%	11.2
Ellsworth	95%	3.8
Ironton	98%	2.9
Mapleview	100%	2.0
Minneapolis	95%	731.5
Morgan	85%	6.0
Sanborn	90%	6.3
St. Louis Park	88%	140.8



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions

- ❑ Listening Sessions held pre-2016 Session
- ❑ Heard from 80+ communities across MN
- ❑ Common concerns fall into 4 categories:
 - Costs
 - Flexibility
 - Workforce
 - Policy changes



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions: Cost-Related issues

- ❑ Debt Service amount and tax base make grants, not loans, the best option.
 - *Debt service can be 25% to 44% of a community's annual water departmental budget.*
- ❑ The local tax base is limited or declining due to:
 - Population loss
 - High % residents on fixed income
 - High % below poverty line



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions: Cost-Related issues

- ❑ Operations and maintenance of existing systems is expensive.



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions: Workforce Issues



- ❑ Difficult to recruit/retain qualified water professionals
- ❑ A wave of retirements is imminent
- ❑ The job of operating wastewater facilities has become highly technical



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions: Communities want more options, flexibility

- ❑ Communities want to add trading to their toolbox of options
- ❑ Cities need help creating asset management plans for future work –
 - “It’s just me and my Excel spreadsheet!”
- ❑ “It’s all linked” – urged a comprehensive approach to infrastructure for drinking water, stormwater and wastewater.



Water Infrastructure Listening Sessions: Common Policy Changes

Broad support for 5 policy changes:

1. Look at nonpoint sources
2. Reconsider the reuse of wastewater
3. Ban “flushable” personal care wipes
4. Public education on water conservation
5. Allow municipalities to raise rates slowly, in ongoing incremental basis



2016 Response

Legislative:

- Regulatory Certainty Bill – passed into law
- Water Infrastructure portion of bonding package
- FTE support at MPCA - passed into law
- Wipes labeling bill passed the Senate

Non-legislative:

- DEED outreach to re-training workers
- DEED outreach to job seekers with “like” skills
- Interagency work on water reuse, trading, asset management



Questions?

