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Position Statement on Wastewater Treatment from UMN to LWC, October 17, 2017

Wastewater treatment across Minnesota serves all communities using a range of treatment options from the latest technology to the most basic types of systems. These systems are operated and managed with equally varied levels of community ability to support their wastewater treatment processes, from larger systems requiring significant engineering expertise to smaller systems managed by part time operations staff filling multiple roles within a community. At the same time, requirements of wastewater systems are becoming more complex from both a community need to manage increasingly complex streams to enhanced awareness of local impacts of inadequate treatment.

It is the view of stakeholders engaged in this sector from the University of Minnesota that legislative solutions to improve overall Minnesota wastewater performance focus on building centers of excellence to support the integrated water management systems needed to both optimize the systems of today and create the vision and technology needed for the systems of the future.

Solutions must include both long and short term efforts supporting investment in this critical infrastructure that:

- Maintain and improve the health of Minnesota citizens;
- Support economic development opportunities across the state;
- Provide mechanisms for resource recovery; and
- Build a workforce pipeline to meet state needs in both wastewater research and operations.

The outcomes of the proposed investment should include:

- Advanced knowledge regarding the underlying science of treatment systems to provide predictable and optimal treatment performance.
- Development of new, more efficient wastewater treatment processes to enable water reuse (including the removal of contaminants of emerging concern), promote energy conservation/generation, understand collateral benefits/consequences of treatment, and promote resource recovery.
- Development of new economic and policy approaches to facilitate efficient wastewater treatment, water reuse, energy conservation/generation, and resource recovery.
- Support of educational processes that will prepare leaders needed to create integrated water management systems through cutting edge research and experiential learning opportunities.
- Assistance given to communities across Minnesota to optimize current wastewater system effluent quality, energy use and investment prioritization.

*Public private partnerships*

