

Fact Sheet

Uxbridge Comprehensive Wastewater Management Planning (CWMP) Project

The Town is taking steps to move forward with implementing CWMP recommendations. This fact sheet outlines key information about the project

<p>What is the project?</p>	<p>As required by its permit, the Town is completing a CWMP. Uxbridge's Draft CWMP is currently undergoing state review. The Uxbridge CWMP Recommended Plan Public Hearing will take place at the following: Board of Selectman Meeting on Monday January 11, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room in Town Hall. If you are unable to make the meeting, you can access the report at: http://www.uxbridge-ma.gov/Pages/UxbridgeMA_DPW/UxbridgeCWMP/CWMP</p>			
<p>What is a CWMP?</p>	<p>The comprehensive wastewater management planning process is the process whereby current and future wastewater needs are evaluated, wastewater management alternatives are developed to meet these needs, and a final plan is chosen through careful comparison and evaluation of alternatives. The process must include the necessary steps in ensuring that the planning effort results in the most cost-effective, environmentally sound wastewater management plan. A comprehensive wastewater management plan typically has a planning horizon of 20 years.</p> <p>The Town was given a new discharge permit in 2014 by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Massachusetts Department (MassDEP) of Environmental Protection. Permit renewals typically occur every five years. In addition to the new permit allowing the Town to continue to operate its current wastewater treatment facility (WWTF), the permit's limits also changed to require a higher level of treatment as well as mandating that a CWMP be completed.</p>			
<p>What is the purpose of the WWTF?</p>	<p>A properly functioning WWTF allows the Town to discharge treated wastewater to the Blackstone River. The WWTF serves approximately 7,000 people as well as critical infrastructure in Town including:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="475 1079 1443 1245"><tr><td data-bbox="475 1079 954 1245">Whitin Elementary School McCloskey Middle School Uxbridge High School Uxbridge Fire Department</td><td data-bbox="959 1079 1443 1245">Uxbridge Police Department Uxbridge Town Hall Most of the Town's commercial and industrial infrastructure.</td></tr></table>		Whitin Elementary School McCloskey Middle School Uxbridge High School Uxbridge Fire Department	Uxbridge Police Department Uxbridge Town Hall Most of the Town's commercial and industrial infrastructure.
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<p>Why are the discharge limits changing?</p>	<p>Wastewater treatment facilities contribute to the nutrient (nitrogen and phosphorus) loading of waterbodies. Permit limits for these facilities are changing along the Blackstone River to help mitigate the impact of nutrients to the Blackstone River and Narragansett Bay.</p> <p>In small amounts, nutrients help plants grow, but in large quantities they fuel explosive growth. Excessive phosphorus causes algae blooms in freshwater systems, while excessive nitrogen has similar impacts on receiving coastal bays. When the algae die, oxygen is consumed in the water during the decomposing process. This means less oxygen is available for other plants and animal such as fish. This can impact the ecological balance and in extreme cases has led to fish kills.</p>			
<p>Algae growth on the Blackstone River at the Stanley Woolen Mill in Uxbridge, MA</p> <p>Photo: Courtesy Doug Kerr https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/legalcode</p>				

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What are the main findings of the CWMP?	<p>The CWMP identified two major needs for the Town's existing WWTF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The effluent limits contained in the new discharge permit require upgrading the degree of treatment provided for removal of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus).• The Uxbridge WWTF has been in service for over 30 years (that is 30 years operating at 24 hours a day, 365 days a year). The majority of the equipment at the facility is well past its 20-year useful life and needs to be replaced in order to continue to provide continuous, reliable service.
How will these needs be met?	<p>It is recommended that the existing WWTF be upgraded in order to meet its new effluent permit and to replace aging mechanical equipment.</p>
What will happen if no action is taken?	<p>The existing WWTF will be unable to meet its new permit limits and the Town will be exposed to legal enforcement actions by USEPA (including fines) and potential legal action from environmental groups.</p> <p>The Town will also face the risk of catastrophic failure of equipment that has well exceeded its design life and will be exposed to additional fines for the inability to continue to treat wastewater at the WWTF.</p>
What is the project schedule?	<p>The Town was issued an Order on Consent by USEPA, which includes a compliance schedule requiring the Town to complete construction of the upgraded facility and achieve full compliance with the new limits by June 1, 2020. The following schedule is outlined in the Order of Consent:</p> <p>Complete Design – October 15, 2016 Initiate Construction – June 30, 2017 Complete Construction – December 19, 2019 Full compliance with the NPDES Permit – June 1, 2020</p>
What opportunities exist for public involvement?	<p>At each key milestone, CWMP findings have been presented at televised Board of Selectmen meetings. Copies of the presentations are available at the CWMP Web site, which can be viewed at:</p> <p>http://www.uxbridge-ma.gov/Pages/UxbridgeMA_DPW/UxbridgeCWMP/CWMP</p> <p>The general public may also follow the process by signing up on the Town Web site for "e alerts" under "News & Announcements". You can also follow us on Facebook to get up to date information on the planning effort.</p>
How can I learn more?	<p>The Uxbridge CWMP Recommended Plan Public Hearing will take place at the Board of Selectman Meeting on Monday January 11, 2016. The meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room in Town Hall. Additional information sessions will be advertised on the Town's Web site.</p>
Who can I contact?	<p>If you need to speak to someone regarding the project, please contact:</p> <p>Benn Sherman, Department of Public Works – Town of Uxbridge 508-278-8616</p>