



Sarpy County and Cities Wastewater Agency



Sarpy County and Cities Wastewater Project Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this wastewater project needed?

The communities of Sarpy County, Nebraska have experienced significant growth in recent years. This growth has generally occurred in areas where public water supplies and municipal sewerage systems have been available, predominantly north of the “ridgeline”. Promoting growth south of this ridgeline (southern Sarpy County) has been more challenging due to lack of public wastewater infrastructure. To address this challenge and enable greater economic development opportunities in the southern areas of the County, the Sarpy County and Sarpy Cities Wastewater Agency (Agency) was created to develop the necessary public wastewater infrastructure.

What’s included in the project?

This project is the first step to provide public wastewater infrastructure in southern Sarpy County and includes construction of treatment facilities in two areas: Springfield Creek and Zwiebel Creek. The work in Springfield Creek includes development of a new wastewater treatment facility in Springfield with about 3.5 miles of new wastewater piping in the vicinity of Highway 50. The Zwiebel Creek work entails building a new wastewater treatment facility south of Papillion, with about 1.5 miles of wastewater piping that extends southeast from the vicinity of 72nd Street and Fairview Road to a new wastewater treatment site.

When will the project be built?

Construction could begin as early as 2020, but the facility likely won’t be operational until 2023 or 2024.

How will the project be paid for?

This is still being determined, but the project will largely be financed by loans and perhaps some limited private investment.

Will owners with septic system be required to tie into public utilities?

Property owners in areas planned for development will be required to connect. It is unknown at this time whether current owners with septic systems will be required to tie into the public utilities when they are available.

What will the wastewater treatment facility look like?

The facility has not been designed yet, but aesthetics will be considered during the design process.

Where are there other facilities like this?

Some examples of other, similar wastewater treatment facilities include plants at Nebraska Crossing, Springfield, and Louisville. The one planned for the Zweibel Creek location may be different in size or configuration, but these existing facilities offer an approximate idea of what such facilities are like.

Will the facility produce unpleasant smells or odors?

Farm-like odors are sometimes detectable, but are expected to be minimal. Treatment processes used at facilities like these are highly effective at minimizing odors.

What regulatory agencies are involved in overseeing the project?

The project will undergo review by Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Nebraska Game and Parks, US Fish and Wildlife, State Historical Preservation Office, as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

How was the location selected for the Zwiebel Creek treatment facility?

A few important factors go into finding an appropriate location for a wastewater treatment facility. Facilities like this are typically built at a low point topographically, where water would naturally drain, and reasonably close to a creek or other flowing water body – limiting available locations in southern Sarpy County. Second, having at least 10 acres to work with is important to accommodate facility needs while maintaining distance from surrounding uses and buildings. Ultimately, there are five sites that have been identified that meet these requirements.

Where will treated water from the new wastewater treatment facility go, and will it degrade water or groundwater quality?

The cleaned water that comes from the plant will go into Zwiebel Creek and then the Platte River. The plant has to meet strict discharge requirements under state and federal laws, which is regulated by permit. Discharge and water quality are rigorously monitored as part of the requirements for holding a discharge permit.

Will this facility cause flooding or erosion of Zwiebel Creek?

No. The project will coordinate closely with the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District to ensure plant discharge will not negatively impact existing conditions.

Has the Agency bought a site for the Zwiebel Creek facility yet?

No. The Agency is contacting each of the property owners of the sites currently under consideration, but no decisions have been made.

Will eminent domain be used if a property owner doesn't want to sell?

The Agency believes it will be able to acquire the property needed for wastewater facilities without resorting to eminent domain.

What are the next steps in this process?

The Agency is continuing to analyze the feasibility of the project from a financial and technical perspective and will be looking to bring on private sector partners with expertise in wastewater systems who would fully design, build and operate of the system.

How can I stay informed?

Project information and information about Agency meetings can be found online at:

<https://www.sarpy.com/boards-commissions/Wastewater-Agency>

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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