

SEWER MORATORIUM INFORMATION

September 10, 2010

The following materials are provided to allow citizens of Hampton to have a fuller understanding of the State imposed sewer connection moratorium.

- August 26, 2010 State Department of Environmental Services (DES) issues a sewer moratorium to the Town of Hampton.
- September 3, 2010 representatives of the Board of Selectmen and the Town meet with the Assistant Commissioner of Environmental Services and other State officials for an explanation of the moratorium.
- State DES indicates that new sewer connections must receive State approval in advance of connection to the municipal sewer system. The State will issue a letter indicating what can and cannot be connected to the sewer system.
- The State indicates that the State Beach Facilities, the burned properties at A Street and those with building permits already issued are not affected.
- The State indicates that requests for building permits for existing homes will only be affected if additional bedrooms are added thereby increasing the resident occupancy of the dwelling.
- Written sewer permits issued by the Town prior to August 26, 2010 for new or additional construction should be OK.
- The State indicated that the moratorium could be ended as soon as two months from its issuance or as late as a year or longer from its issuance depending on submittal of influent data to DES, correction of solids handling issues at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and meeting permitted discharge limits.

The State DES has indicated to the Town that it is required to take the following actions:

- Install appropriate influent flow meters to measure the actual influent flow to the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- Initiate influent BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) and TSS (total suspended solids) sampling at a minimum, twice weekly using 24-hour flow-based composites, prior to recycling streams.
- Repair or replace any equipment not fully functioning.
- Restore control over solids handling.
- Using the State RFQ (request for qualifications) process, hire a consulting engineer to evaluate the plant process and capacity concerns.
- Implement recommendations from the Plant evaluation.

What is the Town doing to resolve the DES ISSUES?

- DES has stated that they have a problem with the raw inflow sampling points that have been used for many years with DES knowledge. This issue has never been addressed by DES until now. The Town has taken action to comply with the State request.
- The DES has requested twice-weekly sampling. The Town has complied.
- The DES has requested repair or placement of any equipment not fully functioning. The Town continually repairs and replaces faulty equipment.
- The DES has requested the Town to RFQ and hire an engineer to evaluate process and capacity concerns. The Town is preparing to issue an RFQ.
- The DES has requested that the Town implement recommendations from the Plant evaluation. The evaluation is nearing completion and will be implemented when received to address and areas of concern.
- The DES has requested that the Plant only receive septage wastes originating from within Hampton until the solids handling issues are resolved. The request has been implemented.

The Town of Rye is included in the moratorium under the DES order. Rye has made independent plans to address their concerns directly with DES while indicating for both Hampton and Rye to continue sharing information in this important matter.

The Technical Issues

The State DES is concerned that the Treatment Plant has reached its capacity. That concern is based upon their analysis of test samples that show higher than authorized levels of Total Suspended Solids being received at the plant. The analysis is based upon tests that DES indicated are flawed and has required be re-tested at new locations where they believe contamination will not be present. That contamination is caused by sampling that includes recycled effluent within the plant being mixed with influent. The mixing causes higher than authorized TSS and BOD's resulting in the readings being twice those allowed in the influent materials received at the plant. We believe that the test results have given incorrect data upon which incorrect assumptions and the moratorium are based. New testing is in progress and will continue. Once the results are known the moratorium can be re-addressed with DES and we believe discontinued.

DES has discussed with us the on-going issues with the dewatering equipment at the plant. The Town has been engaged in conducting repairs so that the equipment can be returned to 100% operating capacity. Mechanical repairs and replacements are a continuing ongoing operational issue on a daily basis. The corrosive environment at the plant makes necessary our continual maintenance of systems on a daily basis.

The Town is working with DES to prepare an RFQ under DES regulations to engage an engineer to review the plant for a fuller understanding of the short and long-range capacity issues that have concerned DES. It will take several weeks to conclude all the State requirements, and obtain approvals to issue and receive back the RFQ and to engage the engineer. Our goal is to complete that process so that any discovered deficiencies can be addressed at the Annual Town Meeting in March 2011, if necessary.

Prepared by Frederick Welch, Town Manager