

Sewer District Board Update

Since 1989, the Woodridge Lake Sewer District (WLS D) has been operating under a Consent Order with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), permitting the WLS D to treat and dispose of an average of 100,000 gallons of wastewater per day. There are currently 677 homes connected to the WLS D sewage system and there is the potential for an additional 184 connections. The WLS D is already treating and disposing of an annual average of 100,000 gallons of wastewater per day (gpd), consisting of approximately 50,000 gpd of sanitary flow and 50,000 gpd of water infiltrating or inflowing (I/I) into the system. At times, we spike considerably higher than 100,000 gpd.

This past October, the taxpayers of the WLS D approved capital projects to reduce the (I/I) entering the sewer system and to improve the efficiency, reliability and monitoring capacity of our 8 pumping stations. The taxpayers also approved a loan from the DEEP of \$983,000 for 20 years at 2% to fund these projects. Work will begin this spring and the projects should be completed by the end of the year.

Woodard & Curran (W&C), the WLS D's Planning Committee and the Board have also been working on cost estimates for the two options under consideration for upgrading our sewage system to DEEP's current environmental standards---building a pipeline and pumping our wastewater to Torrington's treatment plant, or, upgrading our own treatment plant and

groundwater disposal system. We will explore all available sources of loans or grants to reduce the costs to the WLS D's taxpayers. The Board will, of course, recommend the most cost effective and environmentally sound solution.

If upgrading our current sewage system to today's standards proves to be the most economical alternative for the WLS D's taxpayers, we must still convince DEEP, that our groundwater disposal fields are capable of absorbing the authorized quantity of wastewater in accordance with DEEP's standards. DEEP is no longer issuing permits for new groundwater disposal systems. Since the WLS D is in an AA watershed (the highest in CT), it will be difficult to convince DEEP to increase the 100,000 gpd limit on the WLS D's sewage treatment.

In January, the WLS D and W&C met with Torrington officials to discuss the Torrington option. We plan to meet with DEEP staff over the next several months to discuss all of the above issues and also again with Torrington and the Town of Goshen. At these meetings we will be assisted by W&C and our outside environmental counsel Shipman & Goodwin. We will report on these meetings at the WLS D's annual meeting and the budget meeting. If DEEP and Torrington are reasonably flexible in their requirements, we hope to have preliminary estimates of the cost of our two alternatives for presentation to the taxpayers by the end of the summer.

