



Long-term Upgrade Options

Background

Nampa's wastewater treatment plant currently treats 10 million gallons of wastewater a day, which totals to about 3.65 billion gallons of wastewater a year. Nampa currently discharges its treated wastewater into Indian Creek. Disposing treated wastewater into United States waterways such as Indian Creek is regulated by the federal Clean Water Act and requires the City of Nampa to have a permit. This permit is called a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. A new NPDES permit should be issued to the City by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every five years.

Nampa expects to receive its next NPDES permit in 2013. Based on new permits for other wastewater treatment plants in the Treasure Valley, Nampa can anticipate its new permit will include stricter regulations for treating wastewater and discharging into Indian Creek. In order to meet these new regulations, Nampa anticipates it will need to make as much as \$28 million of upgrades to its wastewater treatment and disposal system in the near future.

Improving the way that Nampa treats its wastewater will be a complex and expensive process. Funding the improvements will require a substantial increase in wastewater bills for all Nampa customers. Designing, funding and building the upgrades to Nampa's wastewater treatment and disposal system will take many years, which is why the City is taking the initiative of planning the upgrade process now.

Since 2010, The City has been evaluating the best ways for Nampa to treat and dispose of its wastewater. The City has been working with wastewater experts, leaders of local industry, residents, business owners, community leaders, elected officials and a citizens advisory committee. Gathering public input has resulted in a recommendation to improve Nampa's wastewater treatment facility in two phases.

The first phase of the upgrades will require making improvements to the City's treatment plant in the near future to meet 2013 permit requirements. The first phase of improvements will cost approximately \$28 million and include adding new basins, pumps and digesters to Nampa's wastewater treatment plant.

While the first phase of improvements is being made to Nampa's wastewater treatment facility, the City will continue to investigate several long-term upgrade options for how to best meet future permit requirements. Over the next 10 years, the standards for treating wastewater will continue to become even stricter. It is too early to know the costs of the second phase of improvements, which will need to be built by 2023.

Below are more details about the Phase 2 improvements the City is evaluating:

- **Option #1 and #2: Infiltration** - Treated wastewater would be applied to an area of land rather than discharged into Indian Creek. Recycled water from the City's plant would be pumped offsite and released into a system of basins and/or ponds, then slowly infiltrated back into the aquifer south of Lake Lowell. Two methods of infiltration are being considered:
 - *Option #1: Direct infiltration* would increase the level of treatment to a very high level at the plant. The treated water would be pumped away from the plant and applied to constructed ponds where it would infiltrate back into the groundwater.
 - *Option #2: Rapid infiltration* would increase the level of treatment to a high level at the plant. The treated water would be pumped away from the plant and applied to a series of basins. The basins would be designed to further cleanse the water by using the soil ecosystem to absorb pollutants and organic compounds. After being thoroughly cleansed through the soil, the treated water would infiltrate back into the groundwater.
- **Option #3: Treat and offset** –Upgrades would be made at the plant to treat wastewater to certain levels and water would continue to be discharged into Indian Creek. To meet stricter regulations, Nampa would remove pollutants from Indian Creek at an alternate enhanced wetlands location.
- **Option #4: Upgrade the treatment plant** –Substantial upgrades would be made at the plant and water would continue to be discharged into Indian Creek. To meet stricter regulations, upgrades to the plant would include adding chemical and biological processes to remove pollutants that are harmful to waterways.
- **Option #5: Do nothing more** – Continue current processes for treating and disposing Nampa's wastewater. This option would violate the federal Clean Water Act and have severe, negative implications for the City of Nampa.

Note: Detailed fact sheets about each option are available at www.cityofnampa.us/wastewater/

For more information

To give comments or learn more about upgrading Nampa's wastewater treatment and disposal system:

- Visit www.cityofnampa.us/wastewater
- Contact Karla Nelson at the Nampa Public Works Department, (208) 468-5523, nelsonk@cityofnampa.us

