

OPEN CHANNEL NEWS

News bulletin from Metropolitan Council Environmental Services



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Environmental Services is one of three primary organizational divisions of the Metropolitan Council, a regional public agency working for the seven-county metropolitan area. Our mission is to partner, plan, and provide services to protect our region's water. This includes wastewater services and integrated planning to ensure sustainable water quality and water supply for the region.

The Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) section of the Met Council regulates and monitors more than 900 industrial customers discharging to the sanitary sewer systems. Our goal is to ensure compliance with local and federal regulations and reduce the amount of pollution entering the wastewater collection system. IWPP also responds to sewer-related spills and community sewer problems. These functions protect Met Council and community wastewater collection and treatment facilities, process efficiency, operating personnel, and the environment.

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'Sacred Water Shared Future' Campaign

Embracing our commitment to a healthy river

The Metropolitan Council is celebrating clean water with the [Sacred Water Shared Future](#) movement, a year-long campaign honoring the cleanup and restoration of the Mississippi River — and inspiring the next 100 years of stewardship.

Did you know that in 1926, the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities was so severely polluted that it had become a dead zone? A survey that year found only three living fish in the 42-mile stretch between Minneapolis and Red Wing.

In 1933, Clarence Jonk launched his homemade houseboat into the river at the Washington Ave bridge and described it as “sewage-laden water where fish die, bloat and turn idly about in the eddies, showing their worm-infested bodies like a curse on the men who infected their world. Continuously their white mouths nudge the manure of humanity, the off wash of the streets and gutters; and here, curling under our starboard side, a brown foam bubbles and steams. Such is our baptism into the Great River.”

[A century later, the Mississippi River is a national park, a wildlife haven, and the heart of our community.](#) This is in large part due to the construction of an underground piping system designed to convey sewage to a collection facility to treat the sewage before discharging it to the river. In 1938 the wastewater treatment plant (a.k.a. Metropolitan Water Resource Recovery facility) began operation. Reports from back then tell us that within four months the floating sludge mats disappeared from the river surface.

In 1965, secondary treatment was added to biologically treat the wastewater in addition to the primary or physical removal of solids. In 1981 we established the Waste Discharge Rules and local limits for heavy metals and began regulating industries to treat wastewater at the source and further improve the quality of the effluent that we put back into the river.

'Sacred Water Shared Future' Campaign continued...

Important dates:

- May 12, 2026 – Industrial Customer Workshop 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. CST
- July 15, 2026 – Liquid Waste Hauler quarterly and semi-annual reports due via the [Industrial Online Reporting System](#)
- July 31, 2026 – Standard and Special quarterly and semi-annual reports due via the [Industrial Online Reporting System](#)

It has taken years of collective action to bring the river back to life and we are proud to be partnering with the **'Sacred Water Shared Future'** movement. We're inviting you to join us in celebrating the river. By taking spill prevention measures, using best management practices and treating your wastewater before it goes to the sanitary sewer, you continue to play a key role in the cleanup and restoration of our rivers.

Throughout the year, we will be participating alongside dozens of other local organizations to honor the river's history and protect its future. Visit sacredwatersharedfuture.org to learn more and find out how you can participate and celebrate too.

2026 Industrial Customer Workshop – May 12

Our annual industrial customer workshop is provided to share the Met Council budget and preliminary rates process, pretreatment program news and updates, emerging contaminants of concern, and to hear from you on matters that concern your business. The 2027 preliminary industrial user rates and fees will be presented at this workshop. Minnesota Technical Assistance Program staff will provide an overview of their services and continued work in our region. We will also recognize your contributions to 100 years of cleaner water for the Mississippi River and our region.

This year, we are offering one Industrial Customer workshop with both an in-person and virtual registration option. The in-person workshop will be at our St. Paul office location at the Metropolitan Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF).



Workshop: Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. CDT

- Virtual: MS Teams
- In Person: Metro Services Building, 2400 Childs Road, St Paul MN

All customers holding a Met Council Industrial Discharge or Special Discharge permit are invited to join in this workshop. Check your email inbox for an invitation from METC@public.govdelivery.com to register. We look forward to your participation and hearing from you.

Real-time disposal site alerts are now available online and by email

Our liquid waste receiving (LWR) and Vactor disposal site alerts for temporary closings and other site issues, are now available online and you can sign up to receive real-time alerts by email.

The QR code to the right opens the webpage that contains current disposal site alerts as well as specific disposal site information:

- Site location and hours open, including a direction link.
- Waste types accepted at each specific site.
- The number of discharge ports and if there is a scale and kiosk.



To sign up to receive real-time disposal site alerts in your email inbox, please email us at iwpp@metc.state.mn.us. Include the email address where you'd like to receive the Alerts and whether you use the LWR or Vactor disposal sites.

How haulers can identify industrial waste

Before hauling and disposing of any industrial waste at a Met Council disposal facility, the waste must be approved by the Met Council's Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) staff and an approval code issued.

What is considered industrial waste?

Classifying an industrial load can be challenging, but basically, if it's not domestic waste (residential/domestic septage only) or commercial waste (sand trap, flam trap, restaurant or food service grease trap, or portable toilet waste) it is considered industrial waste.

Industrial waste is defined as any non-domestic solid, liquid, or gaseous wastes resulting from any industrial, manufacturing, commercial, institutional or business activity, or from the development, recovery, or processing of a natural resource.

How haulers can identify industrial waste continued...

Examples of industrial waste include, but are not limited to

- wastewater contained in holding tanks, sumps, and traps from industrial activities
- contaminated waste such as waste with floating motor oil, glycols, spilled chemicals, etc.
- large grease interceptor wastes from food manufacturers
- dairy and brewery wastes
- hospital and dental clinic wastes
- truck washing wastewater (interiors and/or exteriors)
- metal finishing and printing wastes

Haulers should always verify that an industrial waste has been approved and get the approval code before hauling. When in doubt, contact IWPP staff and know that an industrial waste can take several weeks to approve. The waste needs to be sampled and analyzed, and we need to determine that all applicable limits are met before approving.

Visit [Liquid Waste Haulers - Metropolitan Council](#) for more information and an IWPP contact listing.

PFAS survey and monitoring updates

PFAS survey results

The PFAS surveys are in, and we want to thank everyone for submitting these surveys. This data is helping to guide our source reduction work. We compiled and published a list of all [PFAS-containing products reported in the surveys](#). It contains nearly 450 unique PFAS products. The most common product types where PFAS is found are

- adhesives, glues and sealants,
- lubricants and refrigerants,
- cleaners and degreasers.

PFAS sampling at permitted industries

In 2025, we began sampling for PFAS at permitted industries that are considered significant industrial users (SIUs) and fall into EPA's top PFAS priority categories.

So far, we've sampled about 86% of the targeted SIUs and are finding few new significant PFAS-loading sources. Our largest loading sources continue to be long-known sources:

- contaminated groundwater sites
- landfill leachate
- known industrial users of PFAS (chrome platers, semi-conductors, and chemical manufacturers)

Once we have PFAS data for all targeted SIUs, we will develop a required monitoring policy based on concentration and loadings.

PFAS monitoring in the collection system

We continue to conduct PFAS monitoring in the collection systems of our water resource recovery facilities. In 2024, we monitored the Blue Lake system. In 2025, the Seneca system and this year we are monitoring the Metro system. For each system, we are sampling the main sewer lines coming into the facilities as well as sampling in residential and commercial sewer lines to continue studying non-industrial sources.

Please welcome our new permit staff – Liv Nelson



Liv Nelson, Environmental Scientist. Liv holds a degree in Geology and Environmental Studies from Gustavus Adolphus College.

Liv previously worked as a consultant with AECOM, where she supported a wide range of projects. Her experience includes landfill operation and maintenance, drilling oversight, soil sampling, groundwater remediation of various contaminants (including LNAPL, PFAS, and VOCs), water treatment facility operation and maintenance, air sparging pilot tests, vapor intrusion remedial efforts, and MnDOT Phase I, II, and III work.

Liv is excited to bring her technical expertise to the team and looks forward to learning about new industries, collaborating with her colleagues, and contributing to meaningful work. In her role, she will be responsible for managing standard industrial discharge permits, special discharge permits, and zero-discharge general permits.

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2026 Industrial User rates and fees

Permit fees (paid annually):

- \$775 to \$13,800 depending on permit status for Standard, Special, and Liquid Waste Hauler Permits
- \$650 for PFAS-impacted Water Treatment Permits
- \$500 for Sewer Cleaning Waste Hauler General Permits
- \$550 for all other General Permits

Strength charges for wastewater discharged on site:

- \$0.359 per excess pound of total suspended solids (TSS)
- \$0.180 per excess pound of chemical oxygen demand (COD)

Production-based strength charge for microbreweries and brewpubs on General Permit:

- \$1.13 per beer barrel

Full-cost recovery rates for treatment of industrial wastewater hauled to the Met Council disposal sites:

- \$0.440 per excess pound of TSS
- \$0.220 per excess pound of COD

Liquid Waste Hauler load charges:

- \$12.74 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Holding Tank wastes
- \$67.27 per 1,000 gallons for Domestic Septage and Commercial wastes
- \$86.20 per 1,000 gallons for Portable Toilet wastes
- \$82.27 per 1,000 gallons for Out-of-Service Area Domestic wastes

Service fee for Out-of-Service Area loads:

- \$15.00 per 1,000 gallons

Industrial Capacity Charge (ICC):

- \$2.38 per 1,000 gallons
- \$3.05 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$4.49 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – Elko New Market



Sewer Availability Charge (SAC): (paid to the local community for use of the metropolitan disposal system (MDS), city may include additional local charge)

- \$2,485 per SAC unit (1 unit = 274 gallons per day)
- \$3,185 per SAC unit Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$4,685 per SAC unit Rural Center – Elko New Market

Temporary Capacity Charge (TCC): (paid directly to the Met Council for temporary use of the MDS)

- \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons
- \$1.60 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – East Bethel
- \$2.36 per 1,000 gallons Rural Center – Elko New Market

For more information, visit [Industrial Waste Rates and Fees](#) on the Met Council website.

Let's stay connected!

To make sure you receive important information regarding your permit, add the following emails to your address book:

MCESIndustrialOnlineReporting@metc.state.mn.us and

METC@public.govdelivery.com. (*GovDelivery is a news delivery system, it is not an active email account.*)



To update your contact information, please contact the [Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention staff](#) assigned to your permit or email iwpp@metc.state.mn.us.