

# BURGESS & NIPLE

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Firm Registration No. F-10834

May 12, 2022

Laura Mueller  
City Attorney  
City of Dripping Springs

Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Re: South Regional WWTP Capacity Summary  
CMA Job Number 1431-001  
B&N Job Number 39661

Dear Mrs. Mueller:

In October 2015, the City of Dripping Springs submitted an application to the TCEQ to convert its method of treated effluent disposal from land application to discharge into waters of the State, and to expand its wastewater treatment facilities to accommodate the aggressive growth in the Greater Dripping Springs area. The permit was contested and the case was heard at the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). The City prevailed and was issued the permit on May 5, 2019 (permit WQ0014488003). However, because of pending litigation, construction of the new wastewater treatment plant and storage facilities are being delayed. Oral Arguments were heard in the El Paso Circuit Court on February 10, 2022. The City is awaiting the ruling.

Based on operational information, the City's operator estimates that the existing South Regional WWTP is currently at a monthly average capacity of approximately 189,000 GPD. This is based on meters measuring flows to the drip irrigation fields and to the Caliterra Effluent Holding Pond. Below is a summary of the constructed, to be constructed, and permitted capacities for the South Regional WWTP current TLAP permit WQ0014488001.

- 251,500 GPD Current Constructed Capacity (127,500 GPD Drip Irrigation at WWTP + 62,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra and the second 62,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra that is nearing completion that should be in operation within 2 months. This will bring the Constructed Capacity to 251,500 GPD)
- 313,500 GPD Current Permitted Capacity (127,500 GPD Drip Irrigation at WWTP + 186,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra)

- 284,000 GPD Future Permitted Capacity with Future Drip Fields Removed for WWTP and Effluent Pond Construction (98,000 GPD Drip Irrigation at WWTP + 186,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra)
- 222,000 GPD Currently Constructed with Future Drip Fields Removed for WWTP and Effluent Pond Construction (98,000 GPD Drip Irrigation at WWTP + 62,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra and the second 62,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra that is nearing completion that should be in operation within 2 months. This will bring the Constructed Capacity to 222,000 GPD)
- 394,000 GPD Permit Amendment 2 (Adding 50,000 GPD Disposal Area at Carter Ranch and at 60,000 GPD at Heritage PID)

Also included in Permit Amendment 2, is that the existing Drip Irrigation disposal capacity will be reduced from 127,5000 GPD to 98,000 GPD during construction of the new discharge WWTP and 15,000,000 million gallon effluent holding pond.

Permit Amendment 2 may also be contested. A Virtual Public Meeting took place on April 28, 2022. It is anticipated that the TCEQ will refer the case to SOAH for a contested case hearing, but no official decision has been issued.

Attached is a summary of the developments the City has committed to provide service to in the near future, along with a summary of permitted capacity and capacity of different construction phases. There is enough tankage in the existing WWTP to accommodate treatment capacity, however the City is limited by storage and disposal area capacity. For the purpose of this evaluation, a wastewater production estimate of 175 GPD/LUE is used to estimate future wastewater flows. As one will see, the capacity of the existing permitted capacity will be exceeded if the total number of committed LUEs are connected before the current pending Amendment 2 to the permit is issued by the TCEQ and/or if future surface irrigation phases that are needed are not constructed. There are three surface irrigation phases (each 62,000 GPD) permitted at Caliterra. Only one has been constructed and in operation. The second 62,000 GPD Surface Irrigation at Caliterra is nearing completion and should be in operation within 2 months and for the purpose of this letter is considered constructed. This will bring the Constructed Capacity to 251,500 GPD. The following is a clause from the City's TLAP permit WQ0014488001:

Whenever flow measurements for any domestic sewage treatment facility reach 75 percent of the permitted daily average or annual average flow for three consecutive months, the permittee must initiate engineering and financial planning for expansion and/or upgrading of the domestic wastewater treatment and/or collection facilities. Whenever the flow reaches 90 percent of the permitted daily average or annual average flow for three consecutive months, the permittee shall obtain necessary authorization from the Commission to commence construction of the necessary additional treatment and/or collection facilities. In the case of a domestic wastewater treatment facility which reaches 75 percent of the permitted daily average or annual average flow for three consecutive months, and the planned population to be served or the quantity of waste produced is not

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expected to exceed the design limitations of the treatment facility, the permittee shall submit an engineering report supporting this claim to the Executive Director of the Commission.

Based on the flow data collected, the City is at approximately 75% disposal capacity (this includes the second 62,000 GPD surface irrigation at Caliterra nearing completion and operation). The City/Caliterra, is in the process of obtaining authorization from the Commission to commence construction of the last 62,000 GPD surface irrigation phase at Caliterra. It is recommended that the last phase be immediately constructed upon TCEQ approval.

At this time the City does not have existing disposal capacity available to provide service to all of the new developments. Prior to issuance and construction of Amendment No. 2 improvements by the TCEQ (adding 50,000 GPD disposal area at Carter Ranch and at 60,000 GPD at Heritage PID), the City will not have disposal capacity to provide service to all of the new developments past the original committed developments.

However, the City required newer developments to produce “backup plans” in the case the City exceeds its permitted and/or constructed capacities and need to be removed from the system. These include pumping and hauling raw sewage to other wastewater treatment and disposal facilities, individual onsite sewage treatment facilities/septic systems, or small TCEQ permitted wastewater treatment and disposal facilities.

Please feel free to contact me at 512-432-1000 or at [robby.callegari@burgessniple.com](mailto:robby.callegari@burgessniple.com) with any questions and/or comments.

Very truly yours,

**Burgess & Niple**



Robert P. Callegari, P.E.  
Austin South Engineering Section Director

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