



CITY OF MARSHALL AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	Tuesday, April 27, 2021
Category:	NEW BUSINESS
Type:	ACTION
Subject:	Water Treatment Plant Softening Enhancement Project Update.
Background Information:	<p>The Marshall Municipal Utilities (MMU) Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Softening Enhancement Project that began in Fall of 2019 is nearing completion. The major driver of the WTP Enhanced Softening project is the upcoming Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) chloride (salt) limitation for our City of Marshall Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). In 2024, the City WWTF will be required to reduce our discharge of chlorides (salt) into the Redwood River. Since chlorides cannot be removed through conventional mechanical wastewater treatment systems, the City of Marshall and MMU worked together to study various options to reach the required chloride reductions. Following analysis, it was determined that upgrading MMU’s WTP to produce a softer water was the most efficient method to attain compliance with the required limits set by the MPCA.</p> <p>The MMU Water Treatment Plant project is a \$11,585,492 project that was a collaborative project between MMU and the City of Marshall that was made possible by a \$7,000,000 Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG). The City of Marshall Wastewater Department’s contribution to the project is capped at \$2,555,953 through the City/MMU Cooperative Agreement.</p> <p>With the project nearing completion, the next step is to inform the public about the softer water that will be delivered and to understand our process going forward to monitor for reductions in chlorides in the waste stream as adjustments are made. Included with this memorandum is a public notice that the City and MMU intend to deliver to all utility customers via next month’s utility billing. The notice indicates that following June 1, 2021, all water customers must adjust their softener units to reflect an incoming water hardness of eight (8) grains. The water delivered prior was delivered at thirty-five (35) grains hardness, and we need softener adjustments for the customer to save money on salt and for the city to meet its upcoming chlorides restriction.</p> <p>The message will not be a singular message. City and MMU staff intend to deliver the message to our utility customers continually over a period of many months. We believe that repetition of notice and variety of notice locations will be important in conveying the benefits of the softer water and the necessity for softener adjustments to our public. We intend to utilize utility billing stuffers, city/MMU social media, newspaper, radio, and the city website. Further, Wastewater Department staff will be meeting with our major industrial customers to ensure that they are well-informed.</p>

	<p>It is the belief of City and MMU staff that our efforts of educating our public and the benefit of saving money on salt use will be enough to bring our chloride discharge into compliance. Over the course of the next year our Wastewater Department will continually monitor chloride levels and keep our team informed on progress. We have until 2024 to come into compliance, and we believe that this is enough time to encourage softener adjustments and monitor for changes. If we need to discuss further methods of reaching compliance, we believe this can be done at a later date.</p>
Fiscal Impact:	<p>Costs to create and mail notices and otherwise educate our public. We anticipate the Wastewater Department will incur direct costs of roughly \$7,500 to educate our public. Other costs relate to staffing and wastewater sampling and testing.</p>
Alternative/ Variations:	<p>No alternative actions recommended.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>that the Council support the City and MMU staff direction of educating our public on the need for water softener adjustments while monitoring for changes in chloride concentration in our wastewater.</p>