

Town of Chatham Wastewater Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated December 2010

Why is the Town undertaking the wastewater project?

The community undertook the development of a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) which was designed to provide the most environmentally-sound, cost-effective solution to the town's short- and long-term wastewater management needs.

The CWMP, completed over the period 1997- 2009, recommended a two (2) phase plan to be implemented over approximately 30 years. Phase 1 (years 2010-2030), which will result in the sewerage of approximately 2/3rd of the town, is designed to address the nitrogen removal needs to restore our embayment water quality. Phase 1 also address issues such as high groundwater and poor soils that impact the siting of septic systems, and the town's industrial areas.

Phase 2 (years 2030-2040), if implemented, would extend sewers to the remainder of the town.

Goals of the CWMP include:

- Addressing nitrogen issues that are degrading the water quality of the harbors and estuaries along Chatham's shores;*
- Maintaining the excellent drinking water quality of the town's municipal groundwater wells;*
- Preserving the valuable fresh water pond resources in town; and*
- Meeting acceptable wastewater management practices.*

Were alternatives to town-wide sewers looked at?

Yes. The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan documents the alternatives that were evaluated.

Where can I find the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan?

The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan, comprised of four (4) volumes, is available on the town's website:

http://www.chatham-ma.gov/public_documents/ChathamMa_CWMPPlan/CWMP

Hardcopies are available for review at the Town Office, and Eldredge Public Library. Supporting documents, studies, and reports are also available on the town's website.

How will the project be paid for?

The public portions of the project, new wastewater treatment facility, pump stations and sewer mains; will be paid for on the tax rate.

Will there be betterments?

No. The Board of Selectmen voted that all public project costs will be paid for on the tax rate.

Is the Town seeking state or federal money to reduce the impact on the Chatham taxpayer?

Yes. The Town is aggressively seeking grants and low interest loans from state and federal sources.

To date the Town has received grants totaling \$18,501,000 from the USDA Rural Development Program to offset costs for the new wastewater treatment facility. The USDA is also providing \$23,349,000 in low interest loans for the new treatment facility. A significant portion of the USDA funding is provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), so-called stimulus funding.

The Town has received \$12,243,500 from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (State Revolving Fund, SRF) in the form of a low-cost, fixed, 2% loan for construction of the collection system/pump stations. Federal funding, provided by the ARRA, will provide \$1,435,011 in principal forgiveness reducing the actual amount to be repaid to \$10,808,489, a nearly 12% savings for the town. The Town continues to work with State agencies to receive the SRF loans at 0% in accordance with a recent legislative change for nutrient management projects.

What part of the project is the Town paying for?

The Town is paying for the new wastewater treatment facility, pump stations, sewer mains and the section of sewer main (“stub”) up to the property line. Proposed town policy is that the town will purchase and install the grinder pump for those properties that require them (see later question).

What is the homeowner responsible for?

The homeowner is responsible for making the connection between the home and the stub at the property line, including engineering and permitting costs. Homeowners can investigate joining with their neighbors to hire engineers/contractors as a way to reduce costs.

What is the difference between a septic system and a sewer system?

Standard septic systems, or on-site disposal systems, are self-contained systems that treat wastewater from individual properties. These systems include a septic tank that removes

solids from the flow. The flow then passes through a distribution box to a leaching facility where the effluent percolates through the soil into the groundwater.

A sewer system collects and transports the waste to a central treatment facility where it is highly treated, including the breakdown of organic matter. Depending on the need the treatment facility can be designed to address particular issues, such as the removal of nutrients, bacteria, metals, etc., singularly or in combination to produce a highly treated effluent. The treated effluent then percolates through the soil into the groundwater.

The big difference between the two systems is that the septic system removes solids but relies on the soil to breakdown organic matter before it reaches the groundwater. Standard septic systems are largely ineffective in removing nutrients (nitrates and phosphates) that degrade downstream water resources (groundwater, surface fresh water, and marine waters).

I pump my septic tank regularly; doesn't that solve the nitrogen problem?

No. Pumping the septic tank removes the accumulated solids. However, the majority of the nitrogen is in the liquid portion and passes through the septic tank.

What is the "Initial Implementation" phase?

This portion of Phase 1 of the project, funded at the May 2009 Annual Town Meeting, includes construction of the new wastewater treatment facility, 5 pump stations, and construction of sewers along the following roads: Main St. (Route 28) between Crowell Road and Beacon Hill, George Ryder Road, Barn Hill Road, Meadow View Road, Meadow View Road South, Meadow View Road Extension, Horse Shoe Lane, Vineyard Ave between Route 28 and Meadow View Road, Summer Hill Lane, Marcus Lane, Plum Daffy Lane, and Whitley's Way. This phase of the project began construction in spring 2010.

How long will the "Initial Implementation" phase take?

This phase of the project began construction in spring 2010. Construction of the new wastewater treatment plant is expected to take 30 months. Construction of the pump stations and sewer mains in the Initial Implementation Area are expected to take 30 months overall with work stoppages during the summer season and will be constructed concurrently with the new treatment facility. Sewer work on any particular road will take several weeks to several months and may extend over multiple construction seasons depending on the complexity.

Where can I get information on the sewer construction?

The sewer construction project website is <http://www.chathamscproject.info/>. This website contains regularly updated project schedules, maps and notices.

Information will also be available on the town's website (www.chatham-ma.gov), Channel 18 and the local media.

When will sewer come to my street/neighborhood?

Town Meeting has only provided funding for the Initial Implementation phase and the streets included in that phase. The next sewer extensions will be determined by the environmental need, proximity to existing infrastructure, coordination with other projects (i.e. road re-paving, water main replacements, etc.). The next planned request to Town Meeting for funding the next sewer extension project is May 2012.

Will work take place during the summer season?

Work in roadways or other areas that would impact traffic will be suspended for the summer season. MassDOT (formerly MassHighway) has placed restrictions on when work on Route 28 may occur. Work on the wastewater treatment facility will occur year-round. Work on pump stations that would impact abutters would be suspended for the summer season.

Why can't sewer construction take place in the winter when there is less traffic?

Winter construction is difficult due to freezing temperatures, ground frost, and snow/ice. The Town is working with the Contractor to extend the construction season as much as possible. MassDOT has very strict restrictions on working on Route 28 in the winter for public safety reasons.

Will there be detours during sewer construction?

Every effort is being made to reduce the need for detours as much as possible. In most cases detours will only affect thru traffic, access for local traffic will be maintained. However, it may be necessary to access a particular location from a different direction depending on where the actual construction is taking place.

In some cases it may be possible to keep one lane of alternating traffic open. When detours are needed message boards and signage will provide updated information. In addition, Detail Police Officers will be available to assist with traffic and access.

When detours are necessary every effort will be made to re-open roads to all traffic during the overnight hours and roads will be open on weekends/holidays.

Can residents/visitors/deliveries reach my business during construction?

Yes. Detail Police Officers and the Contractor will assist persons in reaching businesses in the construction areas. The project website <http://www.chathamscproject.info/> will contain information on how to reach locations affected by the construction; this information will be updated regularly as construction progresses.

When will sewer construction take place at my address/location?

The project website <http://www.chathamscproject.info/> contains maps and schedules that show key milestones in the construction areas. This information will also be available on

Channel 18 and the town's website. Schedules and maps will be updated as construction progresses. However, it must be kept in mind that schedules may slip or accelerate depending on many factors.

From what point does one measure to compute the cost of hook-up and to where in your home?

This distance would start from the stub (lateral) at the street property line to where the waste pipe exits the house. This distance could change depending on the location of the existing septic system. Some homeowners may find it efficient, and therefore less costly, to re-route the plumbing in the basement to shorten this distance. Each property is a unique situation and as a result there is no one-size-fits-all answer.

What will it cost me as a homeowner to connect?

This is difficult to say as every circumstance is different based on factors such as: distance of the home to the street, elevation of the home relative to the street sewer, landscaping, location of current septic system, basement plumbing configuration, engineering, permitting, etc. It has been estimated that average connection costs will range from \$3,000-10,000.

Are there ways to help me pay for my connection?

Yes, Barnstable County manages the Community Septic System Loan Program which provides low interest loans to eligible property owners that can be used for sewer connections. More information is available at (508) 375-6877; applications are available from the town's Department of Health & Environment. In addition, eligible property owners may be able to obtain a state income tax credit for sewer connections.

As a property owner, will my property values be decreased?

No. Improving wastewater management will restore water quality in the embayments and protect other water resources so that tourist economy continues to flourish and the quality of life is maintained. All these factors combine to preserve property values.

Does Chatham have an existing wastewater treatment plant/sewer system?

Yes. The existing Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) was constructed in 1969-1970. The existing WPCF is located off Sam Ryder Road between the capped landfill/transfer station, the Commerce Park industrial area, bike path, and Middle Road.

The existing sewer system serves approximately 480 properties located around the Main St. downtown area.

Is there an effluent outfall?

No. The treated water is discharged into rapid infiltration sands beds located adjacent to the treatment facility. These beds allow for additional, natural treatment of the treated water as the water percolates through the soil and replenishes the aquifer.

What level of treatment occurs at the existing treatment facility?

The existing treatment facility has provided secondary treatment since its original construction. While the existing WWTF was modified for nitrogen control in 1996, not to address nitrogen limits in coastal embayments but rather to protect drinking water supplies, it was never designed with the capacity or treatment technology necessary to achieve the Total Nitrogen levels necessary to protect our coastal embayments.

Has the location of the new wastewater treatment facility been determined?

Yes. The new treatment facility is being constructed on the same site as the existing facility which must remain in operation until the new facility is completed and approved.

What level of treatment will the new treatment facility provide?

The new WWTF will provide advanced tertiary treatment in that it is designed to provide Enhanced Nitrogen Removal (ENR). The new WWTF is designed to provide treated water with a Total Nitrogen level of 3 mg/L on average (the existing facility averages 5-7 mg/L). This is the current state-of-the-art for wastewater facilities designed to meet stringent nitrogen levels without going to the added expensive and complexity of adding chemical treatment to achieve nitrogen levels less than 3 mg/L.

How much capacity will the new wastewater treatment facility have?

The new wastewater treatment facility is designed to treat the wastewater generated by the 2/3rd of the town being sewered as part of Phase 1 as recommended by the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. The facility would need to be expanded if and when the town decides to undertake Phase 2.

The facility has been designed to work efficiently at low winter flows and high summer flows, the result of Chatham being a highly seasonal community.

Is the wastewater currently disinfected?

No. The treated water from the existing treatment facility is not disinfected before being discharged into the rapid sand infiltration beds.

Will the new treatment facility provide disinfection?

Yes. The new WWTF will incorporate Ultraviolet (UV) Disinfection of the treated water prior to discharge into the rapid infiltration sand beds. This will result in the treated water having Fecal Coliform bacteria levels of 200 colonies/100ml or less as specified by

the Groundwater Discharge Permit. These levels will be further reduced naturally as the treated water passes through the soil layers following discharge into the rapid infiltration sand beds.

Will chlorine be used to disinfect the wastewater?

No. Disinfection will occur using Ultraviolet (UV) Light.

Where will the new treatment facility discharge the treated wastewater?

The new treatment facility will discharge treated wastewater into some of the existing rapid infiltration sand beds and new beds to be constructed immediately adjacent to the existing ones.

Will there be an effluent outfall as part of the new treatment facility?

No.

How far into the ocean will the sewer lines be extended in order to effectively reduce the nitrogen levels?

Sewer lines will not be extended into the ocean. Sewer lines will be installed along existing roadways to serve existing and future development.

Can the wastewater just be piped out into the ocean like Boston?

No. The Massachusetts Ocean Sanctuaries Act prohibits new wastewater outfalls (discharges) into the oceans. Communities such as Boston and Plymouth had existing ocean discharge that pre-dated the new regulations. They were allowed to continue ocean discharge but only after increasing the level of treatment.

How long will it take for water quality to improve?

Groundwater quality will begin to improve as soon as properties are removed from septic systems and connect to the sewer system. How long it takes for the improved groundwater to reach the embayment depends on the size of the watershed and the location of the property. Groundwater on Cape Cod moves an average of one (1) foot per day so the impact of sewerage homes close to the water will be felt sooner than homes located further up in the watershed. Water bodies with smaller watersheds, such as Little Mill Pond, will see improvement more quickly than water bodies with large watersheds.

What is a Gravity Sewer?

Sewer pipe, 8" or larger in diameter, laid with a constant down hill slope so waste moves under its own mass.

What is a Pump Station?

When gravity sewer mains reach a low point (either natural as a result of topography, or a deep excavation point), pump stations are installed to raise or lift the sewerage and discharge it through a Force Main. Force mains from the pumping station will either pump directly to the treatment facility or a subsequent pumping station or discharge into another gravity sewer.

Will Pump Stations be noisy?

Most pump stations will utilize small, pre-built pump units that will be housed in small sound deadening enclosures. Larger pump stations will be housed in small buildings designed to minimize any noise.

Will Pump Stations produce odors?

While there is no way to guarantee that odors will never be possible, pump stations are designed to minimize odors using the best-available-technology. Chatham currently has a number of existing pump stations and odor complaints are very rare.

How are the locations of Pump Stations determined?

Pump stations are located at the low points in gravity collection systems. A preliminary town-wide sewer layout has been prepared and indicated the proposed location of pump stations. However, until the street level survey and engineering is completed the final location of pump stations is not fixed.

What will the Pump Stations look like?

Pump stations designs will vary depending on their size and location. The majority of the pump station infrastructure will be located underground. At some locations the above ground portion will be small fiberglass structures housing the pumps themselves. At other locations small buildings will house the necessary equipment. Every effort is made to incorporate the station design into the surrounding neighborhood. Pump stations will be landscaped to make them as unobtrusive as possible.

What is a Force Main?

Small diameter pipe, generally 4 to 8", which carries sewerage under high pressure. Sewage is collected at pump stations or low-pressure systems and forced up hill to the treatment plant. Properties abutting a Force Main cannot be connected directly to the Force Main without building a Pump Station.

Why can't I connect to a Force Main?

Gravity sewers or gravity house laterals are unable to be connected to force mains because force mains flow under pressure and would "flood" gravity connections. Often

smaller grinder pumps are not sufficiently sized to overcome the pressure in a larger force main from a pumping station.

What is Low-Pressure Sewer?

Small diameter pipe, generally 1¼ to 6” in diameter, installed in shallow trenches (4-5’ deep) in roadways that follow the slope of the ground. Properties connected to low-pressure sewers must have individual grinder pumps that provide pressure or force to move waste through the pipe.

Can sewage back-up into a home with low-pressure sewer?

No. Check valves on the grinder pump and at the street prevent the street main sewage from entering the grinder pump and home.

How deep will the sewers be installed?

The depth of the sewers varies based on the topography, type of sewer, presence of other utilities, etc. Gravity sewers are generally installed at depths of 4 to 20 feet. Low pressure sewers are generally installed at depths of 4 to 6 feet. Sewers must be installed deep enough or insulated to avoid freezing in the winter.

What is a Grinder Pump?

A self-contained pumping unit located underground between the building and the public sewer system in the street (similar to a household garbage disposal, but on a larger scale). The grinder pump unit collects waste from the building; when a certain level is reached the unit grinds it into a slurry and pumps it into the public sewer system.

Under what circumstances will it be necessary for a property to have a grinder pump?

In general those properties where the house (or the existing waste pipe) is at a lower elevation than the street sewer will need a grinder pump. In some areas with only a few homes it may be more economical to use grinder pumps than to install gravity sewers.

Who pays for, installs and maintains the Grinder Pumps?

Proposed town policy is that the town will purchase and install the grinder pump. This will require the property owner granting an access/construction easement. The property owner will then be responsible for maintenance and ongoing electrical costs.

How much will it cost to operate the grinder pump?

One grinder pump manufacturer estimates the annual electric consumption for a single—family property to be comparable to that of a 40-watt light bulb.

How noisy is the grinder pump?

With an outdoor unit buried in the ground, you will not hear it at all if you're 10 or 15 feet away. If you're standing on top of it, it sounds like your washing machine when it's running – just a hum.

What will the grinder pump look like in my yard?

The grinder pump will be buried and the only thing you'll see is the top cover, which is usually less than 30 inches in diameter. The cover is designed to blend into your yard as much as possible and can easily be landscaped to become more invisible.

What will happen to properties using a Grinder Pump when we lose power?

Each grinder pump has the capacity to store about one day's accumulation of waste. Grinder pumps will automatically re-start once power is restored. Each installation will also have an electrical outlet installed that will accept a connection to a portable generator.

Is a tank necessary for the operation of a grinder pump?

Grinder pumps are a self-contained unit, no separate tank is necessary.

Does the grinder pump have an alarm to warn me if something is wrong?

Yes. An alarm panel, located outside your home or inside the garage, has an audible and visual alarm that indicates high water levels in the grinder pump's tank. If there is a problem with the unit, you will get notification by the alarm.

Do grinder pumps require much maintenance?

No. Unlike other appliances or equipment in the home, no periodic maintenance is required. The system is designed to be virtually maintenance-free for long periods. The grinder pump is an electromechanical device that will eventually require service. You can expect 8-10 years between service calls with normal use.

How long will a grinder pump last before I need to repair or replace it?

One company currently has systems in place that have been in operation for over 25 years. Typically there is an 8 to 10 year period before service is required to replace wearing pump parts.

What can I do to protect my grinder pump?

A properly maintained grinder pump should be able to handle wastewater from the kitchen, bathroom, and laundry. However, some chemicals and substances can adversely impact a grinder pump and may cause safety hazards. Please check the labels on all chemicals before using/disposing. Also, never pour the following items down drains or

flush down toilets: sanitary napkins or tampons, diapers, baby wipes, paper towels, disposable toilet bowl scrubbers, disposable floor scrubbers, cloths of any kind, grease, kitty litter, aquarium gravel, seafood shells, plastic objects (toys, eating utensils, etc.), dental floss, disposable or rubber gloves, explosive or flammable material, strong chemicals or toxic, caustic or poisonous substances, degreasing solvents, oxidizing cleaners, fuel or lubricating oil, paint thinner or antifreeze.

What is a level switch?

A level switch is a control, generally a float that signals the grinder pump to come in when the wastewater reaches a certain level. The level switch is an integral component of the grinder pump unit.

Will there be a need for “outhouses” or storing buckets of water for flushing in the event of storms?

The town wells that supply municipal water are equipped with emergency generators. The wastewater treatment facilities, as well as major pump stations are also equipped with emergency generators. Smaller pump stations will be equipped with a connection for a portable generator. The pump stations also have storage capacity as well as the ability to be pumped out by pumper trucks.

Under what circumstances could there be a back up of sewerage into a home (the Provincetown massive back-up in the streets comes to mind)?

The system has been designed to minimize the chance of this occurring. The wastewater treatment facilities, as well as the pump stations are equipped with emergency generators to remain functional during power outages. The most likely cause of back-up is disposal into the system of something that blocks a pipe.

Pipe blockages can be avoided by not putting the following items down drains or flushing down the toilet: sanitary napkins or tampons, diapers, baby wipes, paper towels, disposable toilet bowl scrubbers, disposable floor scrubbers, cloths of any kind, grease, kitty litter, aquarium gravel, seafood shells, plastic objects (toys, eating utensils, etc.), dental floss, disposable or rubber gloves, etc.

What is a “stub” (also known as a “lateral”)?

A stub is a section of pipe from the sewer main up to the property line that will facilitate the future connection of the building to the sewer main. The stub allows the property to be connected without digging up the roadway again. A stub is provided for each property to be connected to the sewer. Properties with multiple buildings, i.e. condominiums, will generally be provided with one stub.

Will the property owner have input into the location of the stub?

Yes, during construction of the sewer mains notice will be provided to affected property owners providing them an opportunity to indicate where, and at what depth, they would

like the stub. Homeowners should consult with a plumber or engineer if assistance is needed in determining where the stub should be located.

If the property owner does not provide input on where the stub should be located, the design engineer will use best professional judgment in determining the location.

What if the sewer line from the street to house connection involves a paved driveway, major trees, garage, sheds, and landscaping, will they have to be disturbed?

These issues would be the same for a sewer connection or a new/replacement septic system. The property owner would have to discuss with the engineer designing the connection the most appropriate location.

Will I be required to connect my house to the sewer?

Yes, connection will be mandatory in order to meet the water quality standards (TMDLs) under the state and federal Clean Water Acts.

When will I have to connect?

Individual property connections can not begin until completion of the necessary infrastructure and approval from MA DEP. Connection orders will most likely be issued starting in late 2012 for most properties located in the Initial Implementation Phase.

How long will I have to connect?

Most likely a minimum of one year will be provided for a homeowner to make the connection following an order from the Board of Health.

Once my house is connected to the sewer what will the ongoing costs be?

There will be an ongoing sewer service fee based on water use for the property. This fee is billed quarterly, same as water use, and will appear on the same bill. The estimated average sewer service fee charge is \$400 per year (approximately \$34/month).

I'm on a private well, if I connect to sewer how will I be billed?

A water meter will be installed on the building's plumbing to determine the sewer charge (there will be no water charge).

Are there ways to reduce the ongoing costs for sewer service?

Yes. Practicing water conservation will reduce your water use and, therefore, both water and sewer bills. If you have an irrigation system using town water consider installing a separate meter so you won't be charged a sewer fee for water used for irrigation.

I just recently installed/paid for a new septic system, will I still have to connect?

Yes. However, the Board of Health will review each situation on a case-by-case basis to determine the granting of extensions to the time to connect.

My septic system needs to be replaced, what happens?

The Board of Health will review the situation on a case-by-case basis taking into account the reason why the system needs to be replaced and the period of time before sewer will be available to serve the location.

What will happen to my existing septic system?

The existing septic system can be abandoned in place in accordance with Title 5 regulations (310 CMR 15.354). This usually involves pumping the septic tank, punching holes in the bottom, and filling it with sand. In some cases the tank may be removed if it is in the way of making the connection to the sewer.

Will sewers be installed on private roads?

Yes. The residents along private roads will be contacted to grant the town authorization to install sewers in private roads.

I live on a private road; will the road be restored following construction?

Yes. Private roads will be restored to a condition equal to or better than the pre-construction condition.

When sewers come to my street, what can I expect?

Sewer construction will involve multiple steps that may occur over more than one construction season:

- Existing utilities will be marked out by DigSafe*
- Sewer mains and manholes will be installed.*
- Stubs (laterals) to serve each property will be installed.*
- Temporary paving will be installed.*
- Following completion of all work final paving will be installed. Final paving can not occur until at least 90 days have elapsed since the last construction to allow material time to settle.*
- Disturbed areas are restored.*

Will sewer construction impact other utilities?

Sewer construction should not impact electrical, phone or cable service in most locations as these services are carried on overhead poles. Sewer construction generally does not impact gas service due to the small nature of gas lines and their location. Water service may be impacted due to larger pipe sizes for water mains making it more difficult to

maneuver the sewer pipes around them. Occasionally it becomes necessary to shut-off water service during construction; this is generally a planned event and advance notice will be provided to affected properties.

There is always the possibility of accidents during construction resulting from unknown or improperly marked utility locations. The engineers and contractor make effort to avoid these situations. When they do occur everyone involved, including public safety responders, work to ensure the situation is corrected in a quick, safe manner.

Will sewers result in uncontrolled development?

The installation of sewers does not remove the restrictions on development imposed by zoning and conservation bylaws and regulations. To address the loss of restrictions on development due septic system regulations no longer being applicable the Town Meeting added a new section to the sewer regulations in 2005. This new section restricts the wastewater flow that may come from a property able to connect to sewer to the same amount that would have been allowed under the septic system rules (“flow neutral”). It should be understood that this does not limit the size of buildings, which is controlled through zoning, only the amount of wastewater flow.

What is the average nitrogen concentration from a 4 bedroom septic system and what is the estimated load of TN based on water use (i.e., X lbs per 1000 gal of use)?

The nitrogen concentration from a septic system is highly variable and is affected by many factors including: type of septic system, maintenance of the septic system, water use, etc. An EPA manual provides a range for Total Nitrogen of 10 to 100 mg N/L in septic tank effluent; a commonly cited value is 35 mg N/L. This is the concentration leaving the septic tank and does not account for any natural treatment that may occur in the soil receiving the septic tank effluent.

Using a concentration value of 35 mg N/L the load would be approximately 0.3 lbs/1000 gal of water use.

If a septic system limits a property to a 3 bedroom house, will the new sewer connection still limit the house to 3 bedrooms?

Yes, Article II, Regulation of Sewer Flow, of the Town of Chatham Rules and Regulations of the Sewer Department adopted at the May 2005 Annual Town Meeting limits sewage flow to the same as allowed under the septic system regulations (local and state).

What is the anticipated increase in the real estate tax rate over the next 10+ years due to the towns portion of the sewer project?

The tax rate impact of the Phase 1 Wastewater Project will vary each year depending on the contract(s) and other fiscal conditions. The town’s website contains a “Wastewater Cost Calculator” that provides an estimate of the tax impact based on a property’s assessed value.

(available at http://www.chatham-ma.gov/Public_Documents/ChathamMA_Assessing/ChathamCalc)

I read the FAQs and don't believe I saw any mention of existing sewered citizens. We live on a private road (Henshaw Dr.) and paid for sewer infrastructure when we bought our land, and, have been gladly paying for sewer services since 1983. As such, why would we be expected to pay again for what we have already paid for at land purchase, and have been paying for the last 28 years?

The Board of Selectmen determined that the entire community will benefit from the improved environmental conditions brought about by Phase 1 Wastewater Project and, therefore, the cost should be borne by all members of the community. Existing users will benefit from improvements being made to the existing collection and treatment infrastructure.

Sewer service charges paid quarterly have only paid for the operating costs to collect and treat the sewage, not for any of the capital costs for the sewer system. The capital costs for the existing treatment facility were paid through property taxes by all taxpayers.

Have a question not addressed here? Send it to rduncanson@chatham-ma.gov.