

Where does the water go?

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PETERSBURG WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

In December of 2001, the Borough wastewater utility was granted a renewal of its wastewater discharge permit number AK- 002145-8 by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Wastewater department would like to take this opportunity to offer some of the objectives and requirements of the wastewater department.

SOME WASTEWATER TERMS DEFINED

BOD: Biochemical Oxygen Demand is a water quality measurement that indicates what demand a stream of wastewater will incur on the dissolved oxygen content in the receiving waters.

TSS: Total Suspend Solids is a measure of the concentration of suspended matter that is present in wastewater. By testing wastewater as it comes into the treatment plant and as it leaves the treatment plant we can see how much of these solids we are removing.

Primary Treatment: This is the level of treatment the Petersburg Borough's treatment plant is designed to achieve. Primary treatment relies on sedimentation of solids and flotation of grease as well as mechanical removal techniques to treat wastewater. No biological treatment techniques are used.

Fecal Coliform: These are the bacteria that are present in wastewater indicative of warm blooded animals and humans. When measured, it is an indication of "strength" of a wastewater sample. The borough tests the water leaving the treatment plant as well as sites on the edge of the mixing zone in Frederick Sound.

Mixing Zone: This is an area that has been designed by the DEC as the area most affected by the Borough's wastewater discharge. It is a circular area 1600 meters in diameter that is centered on the end of the discharge line. The outer edge of the mixing zone touches the shoreline just north of the Sandy Beach Park and at the mouth of the Wrangell Narrows. While ADEC recommends that citizens do not bath or consume raw shellfish within the mixing zone, the Borough's test have historically shown an extremely low impact on Frederick Sound waters by the treatment plant effluent.

MEETING DISCHARGE PERMIT LIMITATIONS

The wastewater utility is dedicated to providing the most cost effective treatment possible while adhering to all discharge permit limitations. Conscientious operators, a well established preventative maintenance program and a well established laboratory quality assurance plan contribute to an efficient and well run treatment plant. The following information will illustrate that the wastewater utility has been working to meet the limitations set by EPA and to protect the environment on an ongoing basis.

	Effluent Permit limits (monthly avg.)	Borough of Petersburg Effluent, 2023 (monthly avg.)
TSS	140 ppm (parts per million)	39.8 ppm
TSS	30% minimum removal	73.0 % removal
BOD	140 ppm (175 ppm in summer)	77.4 ppm
BOD	30% minimum removal	46.9% removal
FC	1,000,000 FC/ 100 ml	417484 FC/100ml
Flow	1.2 MGD (million gallons per day)	0.438MGD

The utility continually reports effluent values that are within EPA limitations. Records are on file at the treatment plant for any interested party to review.

Impacts of Household Hazardous Waste

As you can see, the Borough is doing its part to clean up the wastewater that is created in your homes. All the citizens of Petersburg can help us by paying attention to what they put down the drain. Greases and oils can build up in sewer lines and cause blockages. Rags that get flushed can get caught in pumps causing interruptions in service and potential damage to the pump itself. Household hazardous wastes can create serious problems when introduced into the sewer. Corrosive, toxic and flammable substances are a detriment to the sewer system, treatment plant, Borough personnel and ultimately Frederick Sound. If hazardous waste are detected during routine sampling, additional testing is immediately required and puts a tremendous financial burden on the utility to track down and find the source of the hazardous substance. Fines can be levied on the Borough and responsible individuals for violations of the discharge requirements. It is in the best interest of rate payers, the wastewater utility and the environment for all persons in Petersburg to dispose of hazardous waste in the proper manner.

Proper Disposal of Hazardous Waste

The Borough sponsored a Household Hazardous Waste Collection event June 24th and 25th of 2023. With your help we were able to collect 29,545 pounds of waste. The next Household Hazardous Collection event will be held on June 1st and 2nd of 2024. Items that can be brought to the baler during the collection event free of charge include, but are not limited to: used oil, fuels, gasoline/water mix, antifreeze, transmission fluid, brake fluid, batteries, solvents, glue, stain, paint, paint stripper, primer, bug spray, herbicide, fungicide, gun cleaning solvents, poisons, weed killer, photo chemicals, corrosive cleaners, acids and any other household item that you may have had under your sink and don't know what to do with. We thank you for your help keeping our wastewater system free of these pollutants and protecting the environment. Please help us protect the environment in the future by taking part in the collection event.

Questions or Comments

If you have any questions regarding wastewater treatment please contact Karl Hagerman, Utility Director at 772-4203. Questions about the Household Hazardous Waste Collection event may be directed to Chris Cotta, Public Works Director, at 772-4430. You may also call the treatment plant (772-3787) or the baler facility (772-3228) for further information. We will be happy to answer any and all questions.

Published: May 2, 2024

Comment About Judges Public Hearing – May 8, 2024, 4:30 p.m.

We need your help! State law requires the Alaska Judicial Council to evaluate the performance of judges who will be on the ballot in November (for a list of judges, go to www.ajc.state.ak.us). The Council would like to hear your opinions about the judges' legal ability, fairness, diligence, integrity, temperament, and overall performance.

Please share your experience at a public hearing via Zoom

When: On Wednesday, May 8, at 4:30 p.m.

**Zoom with Meeting ID 863 2522 6382
and passcode 072643**

**Or by calling Toll free 1(833) 928-4610 with
meeting ID 863 2522 6382 and passcode 072643.**

The Judicial Council also welcomes
written comments at the address below or via email.

The Council will review the judges' performances and vote on retention recommendations at a meeting during the week of May 20, 2024. The Council will publish the judges' evaluation information on its web site and in the Official Election Pamphlet.