



## **Town of Lebanon Water Pollution Control Authority FAQ for Lebanon Low Pressure Sewer Project - Dated 5/18/12**

**1. What is the WPCA?**

The Lebanon Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) was formed by the Town of Lebanon in 2009, and is responsible for all aspects of planning, designing, constructing and operating the Amston Lake Sewer System. The Authority is currently made up of seven members from the Town of Lebanon, two of whom are Amston Lake District residents.

**2. Where will the wastewater go for treatment and disposal?**

The Amston Lake sewer system will collect the wastewater from the individual homes and cottages in the Lebanon Amston Lake Sewer District and transport it to the existing sanitary sewer manhole on Deepwood Drive at the Lebanon/Hebron town line. From there, the sewage goes through various gravity pipes and pump stations in Hebron and Colchester eventually discharges to the East Hampton - Colchester Joint Facility located in East Hampton.

**3. What type of sewer system is being installed?**

The sewer system is a low pressure sewer (LPS) system. The LPS system uses small diameter (1-1/4 inch to 4-inch) pipes and grinder pumps for each home. The grinder pumps are installed to provide the pressure to pump the wastewater to the existing sewer manhole.

**4. Why are low pressure sewers being used?**

A low pressure sewer system allows sewer piping to follow the natural topography of the land, and uses much shallower and smaller diameter piping than conventional gravity sewers. This is significantly less disruptive and less expensive around the lake compared to a gravity sewer system, which use larger diameter, deeper pipes. There will be less bedrock removal and groundwater pumping during construction required in the project area. In addition, the LPS system will avoid the need for multiple larger pump stations around the lake, and is more flexible for avoiding vertical and horizontal utility and landscaping conflicts.

**5. What do I need to know about grinder pumps?**

Your grinder pump will be situated in a chamber located outside your house or building, and will grind up and pump wastewater to a pressure sewer in the street. The chamber will be located underground with the exception of the cover which will extend approximately 4 - 6± inches above grade. A control panel will be located on the outside wall of your building near the tank.

The WPCA is responsible for installing and maintaining the grinder pumps, and the cost will be included in the overall project cost. Property owners must complete an easement to allow entry to their properties to install and maintain the pumps.

**6. How is the grinder pump powered?**

You will need to provide electrical service to the grinder pump control panel installed on your house, consisting of 230V wiring with a dedicated 30 amp circuit breaker to which the contractor can connect. This may require you to upgrade electrical service to your building.

**7. What happens with the grinder pumps if the electrical power goes out?**

Grinder pumps will not operate without electricity. Many within the sewer service district are served by private wells, and these would also cease to operate in a power outage, so water would not be used nor wastewater generated during an outage. Properties served by public water should utilize water sparingly during power outages. The pump chamber will provide volume for approximately a day's worth of wastewater storage to accommodate outages. As an additional measure, the grinder pump systems are supplied with special receptacles so that portable generators could be used to pump down the chambers in the event of a prolonged power failure.

**8. Who will maintain my grinder pump?**

The WPCA intends to enter into a contract operations agreement to provide service to your grinder pumps. There will be a telephone number located on the control panel of the pump for you to call in the event of a problem. The cost for the service provider will be included in the sewer use fee. It is your responsibility to operate the grinder pump to minimize the event of a problem. You will be provided with grinder pump operation information as well as what and what not to put into your grinder pump system. Abuse of the grinder pump system may be subject to enforcement action by the WPCA.

**9. How much is this project going to cost?**

The total project cost is estimated to be approximately \$6.55 million dollars.

**10. How is the sewer project going to be funded?**

Design and construction funding for this project is from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development program.

Owners of properties within the Sewer Service District will be responsible for repayment of the project costs, less any grants received, through sewer benefit assessments.

**11. What fees/costs will I have to pay in connection with the sewer system?**

**A. Benefit Assessment:**

All owners of developed property within the Sewer Service District will be expected to pay their share of the capital cost of the system, whether you connect to the sewer system or not. The benefit assessment is currently estimated to be approximately \$17,000. The final assessment will be based on the actual cost of the completed project.

All developed properties will be charged an equal share of the project cost for their benefit assessment, since the infrastructure is the same for each property. Prior to establishment of the final assessment amount, a public hearing will be held at which you have the opportunity to comment on the assessment.

**B. User Fee:**

The WPCA intends that user fees will be based on payments to the Town of Hebron on a per gallon basis and a fee for maintenance of Lebanon's infrastructure. The Town of Lebanon will install a flowmeter at the town line to record discharge flows from Lebanon to the Town of Hebron. A usage fee will be charged to users to cover the costs of operation and maintenance of the sewer system as well as the costs associated with the treatment of the waste.

The annual user fee is currently estimated to be \$800 for year-round residents and \$500 for seasonal property owners.

**C. Connection Charge**

A connection charge is a one-time charge to connect to the sewer system. The WPCA may waive the connection charge, if connection is made within a defined period of time after the order to connect is issued upon completion of the sewer project. The connection charge, if assessed, would be to cover the cost of inspection of the sewer connection. The sewer connection charge has not yet been determined.

**D. Upgrade Electric Service to Grinder Pump Control Box**

You may need to upgrade your home's electrical system to run the grinder pump by hiring a licensed electrician. A Town permit will be required. See also Question #6 above.

**E. Connect your home's wastewater outflow to the grinder pump**

After the order to connect to the system, you will need to hire a contractor to connect the wastewater outflow from your house (currently going to your septic tank) to the grinder pump. A Town permit will be required.

**F. Pump, crush, fill and abandon your septic tank**

Once your grinder pump is connected to the sewer system and operating, you must arrange to have your existing septic tank pumped, crushed, filled and abandoned in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Public Health. A Town permit will be required.

**12. What will be the procedure for making the Benefit Assessment and User Fees?**

The Benefit Assessment (see 11.A. above) can be paid at once or over a twenty year period. The WPCA will use these fees to pay back the construction funding received from the USDA. As is standard with sewer Benefit Assessments, a lien will be placed on Town land records for each property served by the sewer system, until the property's Benefit Assessment is fully paid.

The User Fees (see 11.B. above) will likely be charged semi-annually. The WPCA intends to use the services of the Lebanon Tax Collector to collect the User Fees, so this will be similar to your tax bills.

**13. Can I upgrade my electric or have my house wastewater outlet connected to the grinder pump now?**

No. You should wait until you receive the Order to Connect. See question 15 below.

**14. Will the WPCA recommend or provide a list of contractors for the electrical service upgrade, system connection or septic tank crushing/abandonment?**

The WPCA will not recommend any specific contractor. The WPCA recommends that you share referrals with your neighbors to get the best job done at the best price. Prior to hire, you should check the contractor's license, insurance and references. You should ensure that all required permits have been granted and are in your hands prior to the contractor beginning work.

**15. Who can I contact regarding construction questions, easements, etc?**

Contact the on-site project resident representative, Dave Smith at 860-982-3214 or at [dsmith@fando.com](mailto:dsmith@fando.com). Mr. Smith is an employee of Fuss & O'Neill who is responsible for oversight of the contractor and for making sure each component of the system is properly installed.

**16. When will the sewer construction be complete?**

The low pressure sewer construction is anticipated to be substantially complete (all system components installed, tested, and ready to transport wastewater) by early 2013. An Order to Connect will be issued by the WPCA to all properties with the new sewer service.

**17. What will happen once the WPCA's contractor has finished installing sewers in my area?**

Once the contractor is finished with the installation of the sewer system, you will receive a letter from the WPCA requiring you to connect to the sewer within a certain time frame. To accomplish this, you will need to:

- Complete an application for a sewer connection, which when approved, will become your permit
- Provide dedicated exterior electrical connection 240V, 30Amp single phase for control and alarm panel
- Hire a licensed contractor to connect your house plumbing to the new grinder pump chamber, which will have been installed by WPCA's contractor.
- Have your existing septic tank pumped and cleaned, crushed and filled in accordance with guidelines set by the Department of Public Health. This is for safety reasons.
- See also Questions #11 and #12 above.

**18. My septic system is working fine, do I have to hook up to the system?**

Yes, all developed properties within the sewer service district must hook up to the new sewer system. While septic systems may appear to be working adequately from the surface, the soils, shallow groundwater and small lot size cause these discharges to have a negative impact to the environment and to pose a threat to public health through well contamination.

**19. My septic system is failing, what can I do right now?**

If your septic system is currently failing, you should work with Lebanon Sanitarian to solve your short term problems. Let the Sanitarian know that sewers are being installed on your property, as that will likely change their ideas about how to provide septic service until the sewers are complete. After the sewers area complete, you will need to connect to the sewer.

**20. I am a seasonal property owner. Do I need to keep my electricity on when I am not in town?**

The WPCA recommends that you keep your electricity to the grinder pump system on while you are away. In the event of a problem, the grinder pump alarm will not function if you shut your power off.

**21. Is there a possibility of backflow from my grinder pump, neighbors or the sewer main?**

Each grinder pump is equipped with a backflow preventer to prevent backflow from the low pressure sewer main. In addition, there will be a second backflow preventer at the street line as a redundant measure to prevent the possibility of backflow from the mainline sewers.

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**22. I am a year round homeowner. I received a letter about income based assistance for the sewer project. I completed and returned the survey. What is this about?**

There is a small possibility that state funding may be available, based on income, for assistance in making the connection from your home's waste water outlet to the grinder pump. The Town is making the application to the state for these funds, but there is no guarantee the funds will be received or be available.