

KENNETH J. LUCIANIN
Commissioner



MICHAEL DeFRANCISCI
Executive Director

GREGORY A. TRAMONTOZZI
*General Counsel
Acting Clerk*

600 Wilson Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07105
(973) 817-5700
(973) 817-5738- fax
www.nj.gov/pvsc

"Message from the Executive Director"

When Superstorm Sandy hit on October 29, no one could have anticipated the level of impact or devastation it would have on PVSC. The sewage plant – situated where the Passaic River meets Newark Bay - was flooded by 200 million gallons of saltwater. At one point, a 5-foot wall of water overwhelmed the plant, destroying buildings, flooding pumps, washing away vehicles and short-circuiting automated systems and destroying critical equipment. The impact of the Superstorm forced operators to release billions of gallons of raw or partially treated sewage into the New York Bay over several weeks.

Luckily, our plant has struggled back from dire circumstances and most functions are back on line. But, major systems remain in need of significant repairs. Much of the operation is no longer automated, forcing operators to manually switch on valves and pumps.

I am proud of the progress we've made so far. In just four and a half months, the PVSC workforce, along with representatives from DEP, EPA the Army Corps and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have done yeoman's work in restoring the plant and moving through the recovery phase with speed and precision.

I'm happy to report that while much work remains, the PVSC is making significant progress. FEMA has been an invaluable partner, and as you know, has an embedded staff of representatives on site working hand in hand with PVSC personnel.

To date, 16 facilities at PVSC have had Project Worksheets submitted to FEMA for reimbursement. PVSC has brought in several additional Subject Matter Experts (SME's) including Structural, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineers to assist PVSC and FEMA with assessing the significant damage sustained from Superstorm Sandy. Three to five more are pending final review and submission.

In January, PVSC received nearly \$15 million in storm grant money from FEMA to reimburse the authority for costs incurred for interim repairs and sludge shipping costs. To date, the PVSC has received \$5.6 million for two project worksheets, the temporary sludge disposal project and the temporary office trailers. Due to the size and scope of the infrastructure at PVSC it is anticipated by FEMA that we will be an ongoing "Applicant" for several years, much like the wastewater plants in Louisiana subsequent to Hurricane Katrina.

I recognize these are trying times for all of us here at PVSC. I have no doubt we will "weather the storm" and retain our place as one of the leading wastewater treatment facilities in the country.

Thank you,

Mike DeFrancisci, Executive Director