



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Christie Administration Awards Nearly \$24 Million in No-interest Loans to Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission

FUNDS TO GO TOWARD CONTROL STRATEGIES FOR COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS AND IMPROVED RESILIENCY

(16/P103) TRENTON – The Christie Administration is funding nearly \$24 million in interest-free loans for the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

These loans include \$8 million for the development of long-term control strategies to reduce or eliminate discharges of wastewater and stormwater that occur during heavy rainfall and \$16 million to fund four rehabilitation and resiliency projects, including repairs for damage caused by Superstorm Sandy.

The five loans are being provided by the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (NJEIT), an independent state financing agency, in partnership with the DEP.

“The Christie Administration has worked with officials in cities that deal with the discharges from these antiquated combined-sewer systems in a manner that is environmentally responsible and reasonably achievable,” Commissioner Martin said. “This financing will enable the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission to work with dozens of municipalities in its service area to develop strategies that will result in cleaner, healthier waterways.

“In addition, these loans will help to continue the repairs to damage caused by Superstorm Sandy and to improve resiliency for the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission.”

“The NJEIT is pleased to be working with the Christie Administration and the PVSC to address this important environmental issue through a no-interest planning loan,” said Bob Briant, Jr., Acting Chair of the NJEIT. “NJEIT’s ability to finance and enable the construction of combined sewer overflow abatement and stormwater projects with this \$8 million loan will save PVSC’s rate payers as much as \$2.5 million in lower long-term interest costs and create good paying engineering and direct construction jobs in the process.”

The \$8 million loan marks a milestone in the Administration’s efforts to reduce combined sewer overflows in urban areas. It is designed to help communities develop innovative strategies to reduce or eliminate pollution from combined sewer overflows to waterways as part of a new DEP permit process adopted last year.

The additional \$16 million in loans to Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) include:

- \$9.1 million for the rehabilitation of PVSC’s Sandy-damaged administration building in Newark through the Statewide Assistance Infrastructure Loan (SAIL) program, which provides operators of water treatment and wastewater infrastructure low-interest, short-term bridge loans in anticipation of federal aid to allow critical projects to move forward.
- \$3 million for the rehabilitation of PVSC’s Yantacaw pump station in Clifton
- \$2.9 million for upgrades of existing Sodium Hypochlorite storage and feed tanks
- \$919,000 for new pumps, valves, piping, meters and process control monitoring equipment.

PVSC is one of the nation's largest wastewater treatment systems, serving some 1.4 million people. It operates a 22-mile interceptor line that collects wastewater from all or parts of 48 municipalities in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Union and Passaic counties and conveys it to a massive treatment plant in Newark. Among the cities it serves are Newark, Jersey City, Kearny, Lyndhurst, Paterson, Clifton, Union City, the Oranges, and Bayonne.

Many of New Jersey's older urban areas, particularly those in the densely populated northeastern part of the state served by the PVSC, use combined sewer systems, which are shared underground piping networks that direct sewage and stormwater to a central treatment plant before being discharged into a water body. During heavy rainfall or significant snowmelt, the systems overflow, causing discharges of mixed untreated wastewater and stormwater. These are known as combined sewer overflows, or CSOs.

"PVSC is happy to work with DEP and the CSO municipalities in its district to assist in the development of their long-term control plans for the reduction of CSO discharges," said PVSC Chairman Thomas Tucci, Jr. "The NJEIT funding is a key component to the development and implementation of affordable long-term strategies for the CSO municipalities. We look forward to continued collaboration with the State, the NJEIT and our local partners as we strive to improve the environmental quality of life for New Jersey's residents and visitors."

The new permit system requires operators to develop long-term control plans that include gray infrastructure projects, such as holding tanks for later release and treatment plant expansions. The permits also encourage green infrastructure projects, such as rain gardens and green roofs manage stormwater before it enters the sewage piping networks.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency supports New Jersey's approach, recognizing that urban communities need proactive and innovative methods to be able to address a problem as large and complex as combined sewer overflows.

There are more than 200 remaining CSO outfalls in New Jersey. CSO permit holders have long been required to maintain control technologies at outfalls to collect solids and trash before entering waterways.

The new permit system will reduce the number and amount of CSO discharges, thereby reducing pathogens and other pollutants to waterways.

As part of the state's new approach, municipalities and system operators also must implement enhanced public notification strategies, including providing real-time information on potential discharges into rivers and other waterways.

As the first step in the new permit process, permit holders have been required to post identification signs at discharge points stating there may be sewage overflows during and following wet weather, with the possibility that contact with the water may cause illness.

As part of this process, the permit holders have also established telephone hotlines and websites that provide real-time discharge information. They must also provide leaflets, fliers and signs at areas dependent on waterways, such as marinas, docks, and fishing piers.

For more information on the new combined sewer permit system, please visit:

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso.htm>