

Ohio

Water and Environmental Programs | Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants

Wastewater Treatment Gets Upgrade in Rural Ohio



(L-R) J.P. Pickelsimer, Scioto County Sanitary Engineer; Kris Ruggles, Strand Engineering and Design Associates; Ashley Kelly, Hillsboro Area Director, USDA RD in Ohio; Jonathan McCracken, State Director, USDA RD in Ohio; and Bryan Davis, Scioto County Commissioner, stand near the newly lined secondary lagoon at the West Portsmouth, Ohio, wastewater treatment plant.

West Portsmouth, Ohio, sitting serenely near the confluence of the Scioto and Ohio Rivers in Appalachia, now has an upgraded wastewater treatment plant.

According to J.P. Pickelsimer, Scioto County Sanitary Engineer, West Portsmouth's treatment facility – built in the early 1970s – served the community well for nearly half a century.

But time catches up to all things. Showing signs of age, the facility needed a facelift so it could continue to meet Ohio

environmental standards and meet the needs of more than 1,200 residents who depend on its reliable, safe operation.

“It was a pretty old system that still worked but was not in great shape,” said J.P. “If something was to happen [to the old system], it would have been a challenge to treat the wastewater.”

This led Scioto County leaders in 2020 to connect with the Ohio USDA Rural Development water and environmental program team to apply for a Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant to help fund the cost of much needed upgrades to the facility.

After weathering a series of Covid-19 pandemic supply chain disruptions and cost increases, work began in May 2021 and was completed in just under a year - March 2022.

Improvements included a new liner for the facility's secondary lagoon and three new blowers and updated electrical controls to aerate it, a new clarifier to remove solid particles from treated wastewater, a splitter to regulate inflow of wastewater, and new underground lines for flow into and out of the facility.

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West Portsmouth Wastewater Treatment Plant

On average, the facility treats nearly 450,000 gallons of wastewater per day, with a maximum capacity of up to 1.4 million gallons per day. A bonus for West Portsmouth is that the old facility is still operational and, if the need arises, it can be brought back online – temporarily – to meet the moment.

“Upgrades now ensure the facility operates more efficiently,” said J.P. “It ensures that treated water discharged into the nearby creek – which drains into the Ohio River – continues to meet environmental standards.”

Obligations: \$3,000,000 Loan; \$200,000 grant

Obligation Dates: August 3, 2020

Congressional: U.S. Rep. Brad Wenstrup (OH-02); U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and J.D. Vance

Impact: Wastewater effluent consistently meets environmental standards and facility provides service area with improved, more efficient wastewater treatment for nearly 1,000 area residents.