

**VILLAGE OF ATHENS
WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE PROJECT
FACT SHEET**

Sewer System History:

Prior to adoption of the Federal Clean Water Act, Village sewage and stormwater was directed through pipes and ditches to the Hudson River.

In the early 1970's after adoption of the Clean Water Act, the Village constructed a Water Pollution Control Plant and directed sewage to the plant for treatment prior to discharge to the Hudson River.

During wet weather, the sewer system experiences inflows and infiltration (I&I) of storm and ground water which causes operational problems at the treatment plant.

Because of these problems, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) issued a Consent Order to the Village in 2001. The Consent Order required capital improvements to increase treatment at the sewer plant and to reduce I&I into the collection system. In addition, the Consent Order contained a moratorium that severely limits new connections to the sewer system.

As a result of this Consent Order, the Village made improvements to the sewer plant and the collection system nearly ten years ago. However, repairs were costly and funding through the State of New York was limited, so this work, while valuable, did not result in lifting of the Consent Order. The sewer plant continues to receive I&I during wet weather events which leads to discharge permit violations. The moratorium on new connections to the sewer system remains.

In late 2009, in order to avoid costly penalties from the NYS DEC, the Village negotiated a modification to the Consent Order to create a schedule of compliance for capital improvements that will result in satisfying the Consent Order and elimination of the moratorium on connections.

Design and permitting of required capital improvements was conducted in 2010 and construction began in the spring of 2011.

Regulatory Compliance Project:

The project involves work to extend the useful life of the existing Village sewer plant and to add new equipment to provide better treatment, including new screens, updated biological treatment, facilities to clarify the treated water, and processes to handle the solid materials that are removed from the water prior to discharge to the Hudson River.

Cost:

The capital cost of the main plant is estimated to be approximately \$3.2 million.

Financing:

The Village has secured a zero interest short-term loan to finance the construction of the project. This is the best construction financing available to communities in New York State through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation.

Grants:

The Village has sought and will continue to seek grants to fund the project which will reduce the amount of money that has to be borrowed over the long term. To this end, the Village has met with state and local leaders and engaged the expertise of grant writers. Many grants for sewer infrastructure are dependent on funding from the State and Federal governments and the current fiscal crisis has reduced if not eliminated many grant programs for the short term.

First Principal Payment:

While the short term construction loan does not carry any interest, a principal payment for this loan is due in the third quarter of 2012.

The Village is looking at different payment schedules to meet this first principal payment.