

General information

Public comment period begins: April 5, 2021
Public comment period ends: June 4, 2021 (4:30 p.m.)
Current permit issued: February 20, 2019
Current permit expiration date: January 31, 2024

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to modify this permit for a term of approximately three years.

Name and address of Permittee:

City of Austin
500 4th Avenue Northeast
Austin, MN 55912

Facility name and location:

Austin Wastewater Treatment Facility
1205 South Main Street
Austin, MN 55912-3504
Mower County
T102N, R18W, Section 010

MPCA contact person:

Nancy Heskett
Municipal Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
7381 Airport View Drive Southwest
Rochester, MN 55902
Phone: 651-757-2083
Email: nancy.heskett@state.mn.us

File manager phone: 651-757-2728 or
844-828-0942

A draft permit, fact sheet and Spanish language fact sheet are available for review on the MPCA Public Notices webpage at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publicnotices>. Additional materials relating to the issuance of this permit are available for inspection by appointment at any MPCA office (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mpca/mpca-offices>) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The MPCA will mail or email a copy of the draft permit upon request. Comments, petitions, and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and time identified above.

Watershed: Cedar River

Receiving water: Cedar River - Class 2Bg, 3C, 4A, 4B, 5, 6 water

Description of permitted facility

The existing Facility has a continuous discharge from SD 002 to the Cedar River. This is a Class A Facility.

The existing Facility is designed to treat:

An average wet weather (AWW) flow of 8.475 million gallons per day (MGD);
An average annual daily (AAD) flow of 6.35 MGD;
Industrial: 2.10 MGD;
Municipal: 4.25 MGD;
An average dry weather (ADW) flow of 4.25 MGD;
Industrial ammonia strength of 90 milligrams per liter (mg/L);
Five-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD₅) of:
Industrial: 1300 mg/L;
Municipal: 230 mg/L.

The municipal Facility consists of a main lift station, three flow equalization tanks, grit removal, bars screens, three primary clarifiers, four trickling filters, two intermediate clarifiers and is then pumped to the portion of the Facility shared with the industrial train. The industrial Facility accepts waste from the industry pretreatment plant. The pretreatment plant is owned by the industry and currently consists of dissolved air floatation units with chemical addition, a solids press and rotary screens. It is then pumped to the Facility. The industrial facility consists of two equalization/primary aerobic digesters, a solids control building, two secondary digesters, two degasification tanks and four settling tanks (separators). From there it is pumped to the portion of the Facility shared with the municipal train.

The shared portion includes a nitrification trickling filter and chlorination/dechlorination.

Municipal solids are collected from the three primary clarifiers to two primary anaerobic digesters that overflow to one secondary digester. The secondary digester overflows to a pump station then to the solids storage tanks with industrial solids. Industrial solids are collected from the equalization/primary digesters, the secondary digesters and the separators and pumped to the solids storage tanks with municipal solids.

All solids are then thickened and land applied.

The domestic Facility has a stand by generator to operate the main lift station, primary clarifiers, trickling filters, intermediate clarifiers, and chlorination/dechlorination.

The main lift station bypass structure is capable of discharging untreated wastewater to the Cedar River. This bypass is locked and manually controlled.

The proposed facility will maintain the existing discharge from SD 002 to the Cedar River and remain a Class A Facility.

The proposed Facility is designed to treat:

- An AWW flow of 10.59 MGD;
- Industrial: 2.90 MGD;
- Municipal: 7.69 MGD;
- An ADW flow of 5.47 MGD;
- Total Suspended Solids (TSS) of:
 - Industrial: 470 mg/L/10,800 lb/day (pounds per day);
 - Municipal: 126 mg/L/8,100 lb/day;
- CBOD₅ of:
 - Industrial: 1190 mg/L/27,300 lb/day;
 - Municipal: 104 mg/L/6,700 lb/day.

The municipal treatment system will include the main lift station, grit removal, primary sedimentation tanks and activated sludge followed by final clarifiers and disinfection.

The pretreatment facility is located at the industry and is not owned by the City. Effluent from the pretreatment facility is received at the plant separate from the municipal influent. The industrial flow is first treated in an anaerobic contact process. The effluent from the industrial anaerobic digesters is proposed to be combined with the municipal wastewater after the (municipal) grit removal and sedimentation tanks before the activated sludge process.

Solids from the municipal primary sedimentation basin and the combined final clarifiers will be anaerobically digested. Digested primary and activated solids will combine with the industrial separator solids for dewatering and cake storage prior to land application. Existing liquid sludge storage tanks will remain for flexibility to handle liquid sludge.

The main lift station bypass structure is capable of discharging untreated wastewater to the Cedar River. This bypass is locked and manually controlled.

This permit is being modified to add a compliance schedule for voluntary upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The preliminary determination to modify this Wastewater permit is tentative.

Procedure for public participation

As stated in Minn. R. chs. 7000 and 7001, there are three formal procedures for public participation in the MPCA's consideration of this matter. Interested persons may:

- (1) Submit written comments on the draft permit.
- (2) Petition the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting.
- (3) Petition the MPCA to hold a contested case hearing.

Submitting written comments

To submit comments or petitions to the MPCA through the mail or email, you must state:

- (1) Your interest in the permit application or the draft permit.
- (2) The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft permit you believe should be changed.
- (3) The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

Public informational meeting

A public informational meeting is an informal meeting during which interested persons can ask questions concerning the proposed facility. The MPCA staff will be present to provide information. If an interested person would like the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting, the person should include all information identified above and in addition include a statement of the reasons the person desires the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting and the issues that the person would like the agency to address at the public informational meeting.

Contested Case Hearing

A contested case hearing is a formal proceeding before an administrative law judge empowered to advise the MPCA regarding issues of fact. As described in Minn. R. 7000.1800, persons who submit petitions for a contested case hearing must also state the issues they propose to address in a contested case hearing, the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter, and the reasons (which may be in the form of proposed findings) supporting an MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing. Failure to comply with these rules exactly may result in a denial of the request. To the extent known, the petitioner may also submit a list of prospective witnesses to be called at a hearing, a proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced at a hearing and the approximate time required for the petitioner to present the matter at a hearing. The decision whether to hold a contested case hearing will be made under Minn. R. 7000.1900.