



## What has the Utility Accomplished?

The following key Utility needs were successfully accomplished under the 2013 Plan:

- A number of illicit discharges were eliminated, most notably at 10<sup>th</sup> / Union and Schneider creek.
- Formed a partnership with LOTT to address Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG).
- An increase in onsite sewage system (OSS) conversions has occurred as a result of Utility staff's education and outreach efforts and LOTT's Septic Conversion Incentive Pilot Program.
- The repayment mechanism for sewer extensions was revised to make onsite sewage system conversions more affordable.
- Improvements in the use of technology through the ESRI Collector in field data entry.
- 99 percent of gravity sewer mains and 75 percent of manholes citywide have been condition rated.
- Developed and implemented a cured in place pipe (CIPP) program.
- Replaced aging generators at sewer lift stations.
- Revised the Olympia Municipal Code to allow Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) systems to serve new short plats.
- Established volume-based residential wastewater rates.

## Wastewater Utility Mission

*To collect and convey wastewater to treatment facilities in a manner that protects the health of both the public and our environment.*



### Sanitary Sewers

**Don't Pour FOG Down the Drain!**  
Fats, oils and grease (FOG) turn solid once they cool. Pouring them down your drain can cause clogs in household plumbing or sewer back-ups into your toilet, tub or sink. FOG can also cause sewer overflows into the street. Collect cooled FOG in an empty metal can and dispose of it in the garbage.  
FOG includes:  
• Butter  
• Mayonnaise  
• Salad dressings  
• Meat drippings  
• Gravy and sauces

When you talk about dirty jobs, it doesn't get any dirtier than working in the sewers. Our crews work around all of the stuff that leaves your house when you flush. Have you ever wondered about the term "sanitary" sewers when it doesn't sound very sanitary? It's because the sewer system allows your house, property and community to be more sanitary! Sewage, also known as wastewater, carries bacteria and germs, putting people at risk of disease if it's not properly disposed of and treated. Our crews are dedicated to keeping sewage in the pipes, away from people and the environment.

"We don't mind getting dirty, because we're trained to keep ourselves safe. It's great knowing the work we do helps keep our community environment healthy."

Jerame, Wastewater Operations

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## What are the Utility's Key Challenges?

The Utility faces numerous challenges in providing wastewater service to its service area. The 2013 Wastewater Plan identified nine key challenges the Utility anticipated during the Plan's life-cycle. As part of the Plan update, the Writing Team reviewed these nine key challenges against recent accomplishments and current issues facing the Utility to determine whether or not the identified challenges remained relevant.

As a result of this work, the following eight key challenges were identified:

**Aging Infrastructure:** Aging and maintenance-intensive infrastructure poses risks to public health and water quality. Understanding the condition of the Utility's infrastructure informs replacement and maintenance decisions and is referred to as "asset management". Effective operations and maintenance is critical to the wastewater system.

**STEP Systems:** (New) STEP challenge topics include: maintenance (including lifecycle costs of major components), odor control and corrosion control.

**Inflow and Infiltration:** (Revised) Inflow and Infiltration (I & I) from groundwater and stormwater can unnecessarily consume pipe and treatment plant capacity. To keep pipe capacities from being exceeded, priority areas for addressing I & I should be identified.

**Onsite Sewage Systems:** Although progress has been made on the removal of onsite sewage systems located within city limits and the urban growth area in recent years, onsite sewage systems in urban areas continue to threaten ground and surface water quality and public health, particularly in northeast and southeast Olympia.

**Extending Sewers to New Development:** Planned development in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area requires planning for and financing sewer extensions cost-effectively and equitably.

**Climate Change:** (Revised) Changing climate in the Pacific Northwest likely will result in increased rainfall and rising sea levels. Increased rainfall and associated flooding could result in increased flows into the combined storm/sewer system. Approximately five sewer pump stations could be impacted by rising seas. Early adaptation to higher sea levels may allow for continued reliability and lowest reasonable cost. Efforts made by the sewer utility such as reducing its energy use and promoting water conservation activities could assist the community in its efforts to mitigate climate change.

**FOG:** (New) Significant utility staff time is spent on tasks associated with FOG, including educating customers on proper disposal methods, responding to sewer system blockages and coordinating with LOTT. The Utility's current FOG cleaning program is focused on grease cleaning. To ensure it continues to be addressed, current staffing, anticipated staffing needs and potential opportunities to partner with the Stormwater Utility should be analyzed and identified.

**Equitable and Predictable Rates and Fees:** Creating predictability for customers and developers is difficult in a complex environment. The plan will address the balance between ongoing utility needs and keeping rates as low as possible.

## What are the 2019 Wastewater Plan Goals and Objectives?

As part of the Plan update, the Writing Team reviewed the 2013 Wastewater Management Plan goals and objectives. The review resulted in the consolidation of two 2013 goals (water use and energy) into one new climate change goal. The 2013 Plan objectives were revised to reflect recent accomplishments and current issues facing the Utility. In addition to goals and objectives, the Plan also contains 42 strategies which establish our approach to meeting the Plan's objectives.

**Water Quality Goal:** Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act standards for nitrogen, fecal coliform and other constituents of concern in groundwater and surface water are met.

**Objective 1A:** Encourage OSS conversions through the Septic to Sewer Program.

**Objective 1B:** Facilitate the orderly expansion of the public sewer system.

**Objective 1C:** Identify and eliminate illicit discharges of wastewater into stormwater conveyance pipes and receiving waters.

**Public Health Goal:** No one is exposed to sewer overflows or excessive odors.

**Objective 2A:** Reduce the volume of sewer overflows annually.

**Objective 2B:** Reduce odor complaints promptly and resolve as appropriate.

**Climate Change Goal:** The Utility implements all applicable City and region-wide climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

**Objective 3A:** Reduce the Wastewater Utility's greenhouse gas emissions.

**Objective 3B:** Adapt wastewater infrastructure to accommodate predicted sea level rise projections.

**Objective 3C:** Adapt wastewater infrastructure to accommodate forecast precipitation trends.

**Utility Rates and Fees Goal:** Utility rates and fees are equitable and affordable, minimizing rate increases while maintaining consistent levels of service.

**Objective 4A:** Coordinate the financial management of the three water-based utilities so that utility rate increases are distributed over time.

**Objective 4B:** Manage utility rates and connection fees consistent with the City's guiding principle of growth paying for growth.

**Objective 4C:** Use computer-based asset management systems in order to minimize infrastructure life-cycle costs while maintaining a consistent level of service.

**Integrated Water Resources Goal:** Water Resources utilities are planning together for long-term environmental, economic and social changes.

**Objective 5A:** Integrate Water Resources activities that share common goals, resources and/or assets.

**Information Goal:** Customers and the community are informed about and involved in wastewater management activities.

**Objective 6A:** Keep customers and the community informed and involved.