



Frequently Asked Questions for the Water Reclamation Plant



1. What is the treatment plants service area?
The City limits of Rochester plus Chester, MN. Some homes within the City are still on septic tanks; however, they can hook up to that sanitary sewer system anytime by paying an assessment fee.
2. How many miles of sewer pipe are there?
Approximately 475 miles.
3. How many sanitary sewer manholes are there?
Over 12,000 manholes exist throughout the city to service and maintain the sewer system.
4. How long does it take for sewage to get from homes and businesses to the WRP?
It depends on location and time of day. Sewage takes approximately two hours to get from down town to the WRP.
5. What happens to the sewage after it gets to the plant?
The water goes through physical, chemical, and biological steps to remove pollutants. Once clean, it is discharged to the Zumbro River.
6. Do we drink any of the clean wastewater?
No, water reclamation is defined as cleaning the water to return it safely to the environment.
7. Where does Rochester get its drinking water from?
Rochester's drinking water comes from the local groundwater aquifer supplied to residents through wells. For additional information or questions regarding City drinking water, please contact RPU.
8. How long does it take to treat the wastewater?
Approximately 24 hours.
9. How clean is the wastewater once it is treated? Is it clean enough to drink?
On average it is as clean, or cleaner, than the river. If someone accidentally swallowed a mouthful of water while swimming, they will likely not get sick. However, a person should not consume any river or stream water without additional treatment.
10. How much sewage do you treat?
Approximately 14 million gallons per day.

11. What is the big white sphere for?

The big white sphere stores biogas that is produced from our sludge treatment processes. The biogas is burned in engines located onsite to generate electricity. The biogas is also used to run boilers to heat buildings and provide heated water for certain equipment throughout the plant.

12. How much energy does the WRP produce from biogas?

WRP produces approximately \$300,000 per year in electrical energy savings plus natural gas savings from heating the buildings during winter months.

13. What is under the silver domes scattered throughout the plant?

The silver domes contain odors produced in circular treatment tanks during the treatment process.

14. Do we charge the farmers for Biosolids we apply to farm fields?

No, our priority is to get our storage tanks empty during the short spring and fall application periods. The application window is approximately 4 weeks in the spring and 6 weeks in the fall. In turn, farmers cooperate with us by delaying planting until we can get to a field to apply biosolids. The flexibility is worth more than we can recover by charging for application.