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Sims commends council committee for endorsing odor prevention policy for wastewater treatment

King County Executive Ron Sims today commended the County Council's Regional Water Quality Committee for endorsing his proposed odor prevention policy for wastewater treatment facilities. The recommended ordinance now goes to the full council for consideration.

If adopted by the council, the ordinance would lead to more than \$5 million in capital improvements during the next three years to reduce and prevent off-site odors from King County's two regional wastewater treatment plants. The policy was recommended after nearly 18 months of study.

"We believe the recommended program would provide the best odor prevention possible for facilities that have been protecting public health and water quality for nearly 40 years," Sims said. "We want to retrofit the plants to a level that reflects best in the country for existing facilities."

King County operates two regional facilities built in the '60s: the South Treatment Plant in Renton, which treats an average 115 million gallons of wastewater a day, and the West Point Treatment Plant in Seattle, which treats an average 133 million gallons a day.

The recommended strategy would take place in stages, Sims said. King County would carry out tasks that make the greatest improvements first, balancing costs with benefits gained. The policy also addresses odor prevention improvements for wastewater pump stations and flow regulator stations.

Sims noted that the regional Brightwater Treatment Plant that will be built in the next few years will provide the best odor prevention in the country for a new plant its size. At the South plant, highest priority improvements in the first three years after adoption of the policy include covering several processes and treating captured air from those processes. Those improvements would reduce by more than 80 percent the odor emissions

that occasionally produce a strong musty off-site odor. Total capital cost for those improvements would be about \$4.3 million.

Other high-priority changes in operations and maintenance could begin within two to six months. They would reduce sour and "rotten egg" odors off site at a total annual cost of about \$304,000.

At the West Point plant, high-priority capital improvements in the first three years include modifying existing air "scrubbers" and upgrading ventilation. Those changes would improve capture and treatment of foul air. Total capital cost would be about \$810,000. High-priority changes in operations and maintenance to reduce odors offsite would cost about \$224,000 a year.

West Point needs fewer changes because new odor controls were built in to the plant when it was upgraded in the 1990s to provide secondary treatment. The secondary-treatment aeration basins are covered, for example.

Odor prevention for the utility's 335 miles of sewer line, 42 pump stations and 19 flow regulator stations would be tailored to meet the needs at each location. King County is now upgrading many wastewater facilities built in the past 40 years. Improvements at the 21-year-old Vashon plant, including new ventilation and odor control equipment, will be built in when the utility upgrades the plant next year.

King County's Wastewater Treatment Division protects public health and water quality by serving 18 cities, 15 sewer districts and more than 1.4 million residents in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties.

Note to editors and reporters: Visit the WTD Newsroom, a portal to information for the news media about the Wastewater Treatment Division, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks:
<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wtd/newsroom/>.

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