

*Atlantic Highlands – Highlands
Regional Sewerage Authority*

PO Box 72 Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716

To: Neighbors of the Sewerage Authority Pump Stations and other Residents

Dear Neighbor,

Because of the unique nature of our operations, the Authority would like to brief you on the systems, our normal procedures and important components of our emergency contingency plans that are particularly pertinent to neighbors of our Pump Stations.

The sanitary sewerage from your toilets, showers and sinks typically leaves your building through your underground pipes. Under the street, this sewerage flows into the town's collection system (larger sewerage pipes up to 24" inches in diameter) that carries the sewerage to our pump stations.

As the sewerage travels in the pipes from the buildings, as well as through the sealed pipe from our Highlands Pump Station, chemical changes create hydrogen sulfide (which can produce a "rotten egg" type of odor) as well as other compounds with unpleasant odors. Through most of the journey, the sewerage is in sealed pipes and these odors are contained, but as part of the pumping process it must go through vented equalization tanks and grinder pumps. To control these odors, a biological odor-reducing additive is mixed with the sewerage beginning at the Highlands Pump Station. This biological additive is a safe alternative to caustic chemical oxidizers like hydrogen peroxide and potassium permanganate, and is a cost effective method to control odor and reduce corrosion problems caused by the sulfides.

While we have automatic systems to monitor the sulfides and control air venting systems, various changing factors, such as temperature, the rate of flow from buildings, time in the pipes and variations in the sewerage content impact on the formation of sulfides. In addition, weather conditions like atmospheric inversions and wind patterns can make odors around the pump stations more noticeable. Although there are times we are unable to completely eliminate odors, the industry and we are constantly researching better ways to control this problem.

During the summer, there can be a much stronger sewage-like odor that comes from the waterfront and creeks. Detailed reports of these odors are on our website.

There are no large detention or holding tanks in the systems and our pump stations must operate 24 hours every day. Since the town collection system operates primarily by gravity flow, the Authority cannot control the incoming sewerage and must always be ready to process and pump maximum capacity flows.

With the critical nature of our mission the Authority has created Emergency Response Plans to address different contingencies. We have contracts for immediate response of repair crews and assistance from town personnel as well as back-up equipment and repair parts at each station. If repairs cannot be completed quickly enough, these Emergency Response Plans include provisions to bring in outside equipment to pump the sewerage or transport it out of town in tank trucks.

This is the reason parking areas near the pump station have warning signs and we caution against overnight or absent owner parking. While we are concerned about the safety of you and your vehicles, depending upon the severity of the problem, there may be very little time to react before large emergency vehicles and pumps have to be positioned around the building.

In closing, while the services we provide are a basic necessity important to public safety, they are usually accomplished unseen. We want to be good neighbors and try to maintain an attractive appearance for our property and keep our operations as unobtrusive as possible. In the event of emergency conditions there are likely to be inconveniences near our Pump Stations and alternate trucking routes, but we hope that understanding the importance of the overall public need will make these more tolerable.