

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Act 537 Plan is to address the wastewater disposal needs of Howe Township, Perry County, Pennsylvania. The planning area for this Act 537 Plan is Howe Township in its entirety.

An evaluation of existing on-lot disposal systems throughout the Township indicated that there is a need for improved wastewater disposal in the Juniata Parkway Study Area and the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area of the Township. The results of the sanitary survey are summarized in Chapter 3. The maps summarizing the results of the surveys are included in Appendix F. Complete results of the sanitary survey are presented in Appendix B.

Three study areas were identified based on needs derived from the number of on-lot malfunctions, well water sample results, and planned and projected growth. These study areas include the Juniata Parkway Study Area, the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area, and the Rural Focus Area. Descriptions of the each respective study area are presented in this Plan. Structural alternatives for providing improved sewage facilities to these study areas were evaluated on the basis of environmental soundness, cost-effectiveness, and structural feasibility.

The following summarizes the wastewater planning needs and recommendations of the Plan:

1. Howe Township shall adopt an Ordinance governing the management of on-lot disposal systems (OLDS) within the Township.

As discussed in Section 5.7, Howe Township shall adopt an ordinance governing the management of on-lot disposal systems (OLDS) to provide for management of the Township's OLDS systems and to ensure that proper operation and maintenance of those facilities is conducted by the Township's residents. A draft copy of the On-lot Sewage Management Ordinance is included as Appendix D. This Ordinance provides requirements for the permitting, inspection, operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of OLDS within the Township. Mandatory periodic inspection and pumping of OLDS as determined by inspection is included within the Ordinance.

Successful implementation of the Ordinance is expected to have a positive impact on surface water and drinking water supplies in areas of the Township where OLDS systems are utilized. Periodic pumping of the tanks as determined by inspection will provide for improved operation of the systems and help to eliminate the occurrence of OLDS malfunctions. Currently, Howe Township does not have any ordinances or regulations requiring mandatory tank inspection or maintenance.

The implementation of the Ordinance will allow the Township to further evaluate the need for improved sewage facilities after mandatory inspection and maintenance activities have commenced for some period of time. In other municipalities where sewage management plans have been enacted and mandatory inspection and maintenance is conducted, a decrease in the frequency of confirmed OLDS malfunctions have been observed.

2. Public sewer service should be provided in the Juniata Parkway Study Area in conjunction with public sewer service in the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area.

As shown in the cost analyses of the prepared structural alternatives, the provision of public sewer service to the Juniata Parkway is not economically feasible as a stand alone project; however, it becomes more feasible when included in the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area and with favorable funding.

The structural alternatives evaluated in this Act 537 Plan to provide public sewer service to the Juniata Parkway Study Area and the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area represent technically feasible solutions for wastewater management in these areas; however, the solutions are not cost effective as presented. Of the identified alternatives, it is recommended that the Township pursue Alternative 4A (Structural Alternative 2B with increased capacity for treatment at the NBMA). This alternative should be implemented when a favorable inter-municipal agreement is negotiated with the Newport Borough Municipal Authority (NBMA) and funding secured. Without inter-municipal agreement, development agreements, and favorable funding (public and private) this alternative is not feasible and will not be implemented. This alternative is environmentally sound, resulting in the abandonment of malfunctioning OLDS in the areas, abandonment of existing and proposed packaged wastewater treatment facilities, and secondary treatment of the wastewater at the NBMA WWTP. This alternative also provides proper planning for future growth in the Township.

Alternatives formulated to provide public sewer service to the Rural Focus Area are the most costly structural alternatives identified in this study due to the amount of infrastructure that must be built to serve the small number of properties currently located in this area of the Township. It is recommended that public sewer service not be provided to the Rural Service Area at this time; however, the Township may consider providing public sewer service in this area if the projected user base increases to a point where the project would become economically feasible.

3. Howe Township shall adopt an ordinance requiring mandatory connection of commercial and residential structures in the Township to public sewer when available.

In order to improve the quality of water supplies, protect public health, and increase the feasibility of public sewer service for the Township, an Ordinance shall be passed by the Township, mandating commercial and residential structures located within 300-feet of public sewer to connect to the public sewer system and abandon their existing OLDS or packaged wastewater treatment facility.

The estimated project cost of the recommended structural alternative for the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area (Alternative 4A) is approximately \$8,296,400. To implement this structural alternative while maintaining a reasonable user rate, a financing plan consisting of a combination of the payment of tapping fees from new connections, grant money, capital contributions from developers, and a low interest (PENNVEST, R.U.S., etc.) will be required.

The Howe Township Municipal Authority (HTMA) does not currently have sufficient staffing and resources to implement the selected public sewer alternative. HTMA will need to explore options for future operation of sewer facilities including hiring operations staff, sub-contracting operations, etc.

The On-lot Management Ordinance shall be adopted within one year from the date of DEP approval of this Act 537 Plan and implemented at that time as indicated in the table below. The implementation of the selected structural alternative (Alternative 4A) for the S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area and the Juniata Parkway Study Area shall be completed in accordance with the schedule shown below assuming that a favorable inter-municipal agreement with NBMA can be negotiated and funding secured. Without the favorable inter-municipal agreement, development agreements, and favorable funding (public and private) this alternative is not feasible and will not be implemented.

The following activities shall be undertaken to ensure successful implementation of the selected alternatives within the specified timeframes:

Recommendation 1 - On-lot Sewage Management Ordinance Schedule	
Year(s)	Activity
0-1	Adopt On-lot Sewage Management Ordinance
1 to Date of Connection to Public Sewer	Implement On-lot Sewage Management Ordinance

Recommendation 2 -Construction of Public Sewers for S.R. 34 Planned Growth Area and the Juniata Parkway Study Area (Alternative 4A) Schedule	
Year(s)	Activity
0 – 2	Negotiate Inter-municipal Agreement with NBMA Including Reserved Capacity
	Negotiate Development Agreements with Projected Developments for Cost Sharing
1 – 3	Pursue Funding Opportunities for Construction of Alternative 4A Facilities
3 – 5 (1)	Design and Permit Alternative 4A Facilities
6 – 8 (1)	Construct Alternative 4A Facilities
8 – 9 (1)	Complete Connections to Alternative 4A Facilities

Note (1): Only feasible if favorable inter-municipal agreement with NBMA can be negotiated and funding secured. Without the favorable inter-municipal agreement, development agreements, and favorable funding (public and private) this alternative is not feasible and will not be implemented.

Recommendation 3- Mandatory Connection Ordinance Schedule	
Year(s)	Activity
0 - 1	Adopt Mandatory Connection Ordinance