



Town of Montague

Water Pollution Control Facility

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WPCF FY23 Staffing Request-Laboratory Manager

Summary

The WPCF seeks to create a full time Laboratory Manager position in order to consistently accommodate the wide array of testing required as part of the Town's current discharge permit, industrial pretreatment program, storm water pollution prevention program permit, and day to day process operations that occur at the wastewater treatment facility.

Current Capacity

Currently, the facility rotates laboratory duties between 6-7 operators. While cross training in the laboratory is an important aspect for operators, this ultimately ties up available licensed operators from daily rounds, field work, process control, routine maintenance, pump station rounds, general contracting on projects, spare parts inventory, and equipment emergency response. Having to spread the workload among different staff also leads to inconsistencies in laboratory practices, scheduling, methods, and reporting.

Future Capacity

EPA has advised that the new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits will be issued to Montague in the coming year. These permits will require additional testing and analysis of PFAS in effluent, influent, and sludge. They will also require additional testing in nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and nitrates/nitrites.

The WPCF is also currently looking into composting in house as an option for sludge disposal. Some examples of testing requirements for composting sludge include bacteriological, PFAS, temperature, moisture content, organics, pH, conventional and inorganic pollutants, and metals. The facility would like to keep as much testing as possible in house in order to make the addition of a new process, such as composting, more viable.

Proposal Budgetary Impacts

The WPCF proposes a full-time Laboratory Manager whose time would be dedicated exclusively to management of the laboratory, which includes the following summary of duties: (Please see attached draft Laboratory Manger Job Description for further detail.)

- Bacteriological and chemical sample collection and analysis
- Coordinates, schedules, tracks and reports analytical data
- Prepares chemical and bacteriological reagents and medias
- Maintains records, SOPs, and prepares reports (including discharge monitoring)
- Cleaning, calibration, operation and maintenance of laboratory equipment and field samplers
- Quality control and quality assurance

The facility anticipates an approximate 2.4% overall increase to the FY23 budget from the creation of this position. Despite this increase, the facility foresees several cost savings and cost avoidances with having a dedicated position in the laboratory.

While some contracted laboratory services are unavoidable due to EPA/DEP certified laboratory regulations, the following table illustrates testing that can be brought back in house with a Laboratory Manager in place:

Test	Frequency per Year	Cost per Test	Total Cost per Year
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (EFF, INF)	104	\$150.00	\$15,600.00
Total Suspended Solids (EFF, INF, MLSS, RAS)	104+730 =834	\$15.00	\$12,510.00
Total			\$28,110.00

Conclusion

With new testing requirements on the horizon, and limited operator availability, the WPCF believes it is critical to have a dedicated Laboratory Manager who can manage the significant laboratory duties required at the facility. This position is ultimately part of a long term plan for the WPCF that will facilitate greater permit compliance, maintain continuity of operations, and offset the increasing costs of contracted lab services that will negatively impact future budgets.