

Wastewater Overview

How Crookston treats Wastewater Collection

1

How Wastewater Gets To Us

Wastewater from homes, businesses, and industries leaves buildings through private plumbing.

It flows into the City's sanitary sewer system — underground pipes that rely mostly on gravity.

Where gravity isn't possible, lift stations pump wastewater uphill and keep it moving toward the treatment ponds.

2

Getting Wastewater To The System

Wastewater from homes, businesses, and industry flows into the City's sanitary sewer system.

Gravity mains carry most flow; lift stations pump wastewater where elevation changes require it.

All wastewater is conveyed to the City's wastewater treatment ponds.

3

Initial Treatment

Wastewater first enters primary stabilization ponds. In these ponds heavier solids settle to the bottom, natural bacteria begin breaking down organic material, and sunlight and time help reduce pathogens

This is a low-energy, highly reliable biological process well suited for northern Minnesota.

4

Permit Approval & Monitoring

The City operates under a strict permit from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Before any discharge occurs, water quality is sampled and tested, results must meet all permit limits, and explicit authorization to discharge is required.

"We cannot discharge unless testing shows the water meets environmental standards"

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Secondary Sand-Filtration Ponds

This is where Crookston stands out statewide.

Once discharge permission is granted, treated wastewater is routed to secondary ponds with sand bottoms.

Instead of being discharged immediately, water slowly moves through sand-bottom ponds, receives additional natural filtration and polishing, and benefits from physical filtration, biological activity, and sunlight.

6

Why This Matters

The sand acts as a natural filter, removing remaining fine particles.

This extra step improves clarity and overall water quality.

It provides an added layer of environmental protection beyond standard lagoon treatment.

7

After passing through the sand-filtration ponds, water is considered discharged?

Only during approved periods

Under strict volume and timing limits

With continued monitoring and reporting

8

Chuck Getsman Statement

“We treat wastewater in stabilization ponds, just like many Minnesota cities. But what makes Crookston unique is that after we receive permission to discharge, we send the water through secondary sand-bottom ponds. That sand provides additional natural filtration and polishing before the water ever leaves our system. It’s an extra environmental protection step that very few lagoon systems in the state have.”