



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Southwest Region Office

PO Box 47775, Olympia, WA 98504-7775 • 360-407-6300

April 15, 2025

The Honorable Todd Dinehart
City of Woodland
PO Box 9
Woodland, WA 98674

Re: WA0020401– City of Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant 2025, Inspection

Dear Mayor Todd Dinehart:

On April 1, 2025, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) conducted an inspection of the City of Woodland WWTP. Enclosed you will find a copy of our inspection report for your records. We would like to express our thanks to Derrek Amburgey for the courtesy extended during the inspection.

We appreciate the City's effort and attention in caring for the WWTP.

If you have any other questions, or if we can be of service to you, please contact Eleanor Ott at eleanor.ott@ecy.wa.gov or (360) 280-5624, or Bolun Wang at bolun.wang@ecy.wa.gov or (360) 280-7472.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Ott
Senior Water Quality Engineer
Southwest Region Office
Water Quality Program

Enclosure: Inspection Report

cc: Riley Bunnell, Public Works Director
Derrek Amburgey, Operator in Responsible Charge
Permit File, Woodland STP WWTP

C. Facility Description and Background

The city of Woodland owns and operates an activated sludge wastewater treatment plant that discharges to the Lewis River. The sequencing batch reactor treatment plant is a Class III treatment plant and receives municipal wastewater from the city of Woodland and industrial discharges from four permitted industries in the sewer shed.

D. Inspection Narrative and Observations

1. Permit Documentation and Records Review

Department of Ecology (Ecology) reviewed laboratory bench sheets and cross referenced submitted Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) with the bench sheet data. Overall, the lab was well organized and tidy. Derrek keeps preventative maintenance records for each unit process and piece of equipment used at the WWTP. Laboratory accreditation paperwork was verified as well as a copy of the discharge permit. No deficiencies were found in the record keeping portion of the inspection.

2. Site Walkthrough

The inspection started at the headworks. The influent drum screen removes particulates ahead of a grit chamber. Influent flows to the headworks are continuous from the influent lift station. At the time of the inspection, the motor that turns the paddle in the grit chamber was broken. Derrek indicated that the facility had just received a new motor and that it would be replaced ASAP. [NOTE: Derrek called to confirm they completed the motor installation and brought the unit process back online the afternoon of April 1, 2025] The influent flow meter, positioned in a Parshall flume downstream of the grit removal system was calibrated two weeks ago. Derrek keeps all flow meters calibrated on an annual basis.

Six blowers provide air to 3 sequencing batch reactor (SBR) basins. Blowers #5 and #6 run SBR 3 and rarely come online. Regular operation of SBR basins 1 and 2 require 3 blowers (duty) and one on standby. These blowers are controlled by dissolved oxygen set points (2.0 mg/L). The pressure gauge to blower #2 was found to be nonfunctional even though the blower was operational during the time of the inspection. Derrek indicated that he tracks MLSS and settleometer results for process control. Operators also track SVI. Seasonal changes in settling characteristics were reported during the inspection. Each SBR runs on a 6-hour cycle. Decants occur from each of the two online SBRs four times per day for 50 minutes at regular intervals (a total of 8 decants per day). Decanted flows go through one of two UV disinfection banks (one duty, one standby) before being discharged into the Lewis River. Derrek expressed some concerns about the stagnant effluent in the effluent basin; however, there have not been any instances where the algae or detritus in the effluent basin has caused an effluent violation. Some white foam was observed on the outlet side of the effluent basin. During the last few years, Derrek installed an online pH and temperature gauge at the effluent basin to avoid having to take daily grab samples for these parameters. The proposed permit will reflect this change at the facility.

Solids from the SBR are wasted to a thickener before being aerobically digested and then dewatered via screw press. The screw press runs almost continuously; the city of Woodland has a solids storage and management problem where excess solids from SBRs 1 and 2 may be kept in the empty SBR3 until they're ready for digestion and dewatering. In general, the facility is able to dewater one of the two aerobic digesters while the other one fills from the thickener. A solids storage tank would alleviate the pressure and provide more operational flexibility at the treatment plant.

E. Areas of Concern

Overall, Ecology has very few concerns in regard to the operation of the WWTP. The operators operate the treatment units well, maintain a clean plant, and have a good sense of how to run the facility. There are some concerns related to the industrial discharges to the WWTP as some pass through has been observed at the facility. Ecology is responsible for these industrial discharges and writes pretreatment permits for Pacific Seafood (ST0006222), Portco Packaging (ST0006272), Walts Wholesale Meats Inc (ST0005055), Applied Plant Science (ST0006265) and a newly permitted pet food facility Northwest Pet Products (Alphia) (ST0501372). The pet food facility sometimes turns the influent red from releases of dye.

Solids handling procedures need to be refined as they leave Derrek with very little leeway for removing solids from the treatment system. Ecology supports the installation of a solids storage tank and will condition the proposed permit with a requirement to submit an engineering report so that the city can move forward with this project. Derrek indicated that the city is considering adding a decant facility at the treatment plant. Ecology must approve this addition at the WWTP before the city can move forward with design and construction.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this inspection report, please contact Eleanor Ott at eleanor.ott@ecy.wa.gov or (360) 280-5624.

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