The clarification process uses gravity to settle out sediment and natural organic matter from wastewater to make it clear.
CMOM Update
CAPACITY, MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

In the December 2020 issue of The Clarifier, we explained San Antonio River Authority’s (River Authority) Capacity, Management, Operations, and Maintenance program, also known as CMOM. As promised, we want to provide our customers and readers with an update.

First, as a refresher. What is CMOM? It is a broad picture or holistic framework used to manage, operate, and maintain collection systems, investigate areas of strain in the wastewater collection system, and to identify conditions and infrastructure vulnerabilities that may contribute to future maintenance issues such as line breaks. This is important as this program helps predict and proactively address issues before they become emergency maintenance concerns. Routinely identifying and addressing issues is more cost and time efficient for our customers and the communities we serve. Benefits from this program can include cost savings by avoiding overtime as well as avoidance of emergency construction costs. A CMOM Program gives a utility the tools and data to effectively manage, maintain, and improve their collection systems.

Our consultant, HDR Engineers, is assisting us in forming the processes and procedures of the program and calibrating capacity models. In the December Clarifier article, we outlined three areas of focus: Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Planning, Capacity Assessment, and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Using our newly improved GIS collection system asset inventory, we have updated and created capacity models for Salitrillo, Upper Martinez, and Martinez II wastewater treatment plant service areas. These calibrated models will allow us to identify undersized collection mains and to project future capacity constraints as our service area grows. Our team is hard at work prioritizing the assessment and creating a robust, data-driven proactive maintenance program.

By creating and adopting a CMOM program, the River Authority aims to continue to provide excellent wastewater treatment operations and curtail maintenance costs by addressing issues before they become problems.

Sunset Advisory Commission Invites Public Input on the San Antonio River Authority

The Sunset Advisory Commission is reviewing the mission and performance of the San Antonio River Authority (River Authority) and welcomes public comments on ideas to improve its operations and services. The Texas Sunset Act requires the Sunset Commission to periodically review the River Authority and recommend whether to change state law to improve the authority’s efficiency and effectiveness. The Legislature ultimately will decide whether to adopt Sunset’s statutory recommendations. The Sunset Commission also may adopt management directives for the River Authority that do not require statutory change.

The Sunset process has three stages. First, Sunset staff will evaluate the River Authority, seek public input, and issue a report recommending solutions to problems found. Second, the Sunset Commission will hold two public meetings: a hearing on the staff report and the agency, and a decision meeting to adopt recommendations to the Legislature based on the report and public comments. Third, the Legislature will convene in January 2023 and will consider Sunset’s statutory recommendations in a Sunset bill for the San Antonio River Authority.

Here are several ways to provide comments and suggestions to Sunset staff on the San Antonio River Authority’s mission, operations, and services:

- Send an email to sunset@sunset.texas.gov
- Submit comments online at www.sunset.texas.gov
- Send a letter to Sunset Advisory Commission, Attn: San Antonio River Authority, P.O. Box 13066, Austin, Texas 78711
- Call (512) 463-1300 to speak to Sadie Smeck, project manager of the San Antonio River Authority review

Please provide your comments by January 7, 2022 to ensure Sunset staff can fully consider your input while conducting their review. Comments submitted before the staff report is published in March 2022 will remain confidential.

Stay informed! Visit www.sunset.texas.gov to sign up for email alerts on the Sunset staff report and the Sunset Commission’s public meetings on the San Antonio River Authority.

sariverauthority.org/utilities
@sanantonioriver
Expanding Utility Infrastructure for our Growing Community

The San Antonio River Authority (River Authority) Utilities Department operates and maintains five permitted and active wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) primarily in East Bexar County. We have previously shared that two of the five plants are currently undergoing plant expansions. In addition to serving growing populations, plant expansions assist in servicing and updating our treatment systems, system administration, and operation and maintenance.

The Salitrillo WWTP, located in Converse, Texas, was the River Authority’s first WWTP and was opened in 1966. It is currently permitted to treat up to 5.83 million gallons per day (MGD) and will be expanded to 7.33 MGD to accommodate existing connections and anticipated development in the area. An open house was held at Converse City Hall in early August, ahead of the 2021-2022 school year, for residents to learn more about the project and the temporary impacts they may see in their neighborhood. Construction is expected to start late fall and is scheduled to be completed in early 2023.

The Martinez IV WWTP, located in St. Hedwig, Texas, is the River Authority’s newest WWTP, which opened in April 2019. Not only is it the newest, but the plant received a Silver Envision Rating from the Institute of Sustainable Infrastructure. The plant serves 3,600 customers and is permitted for 0.25 MGD. Due to the rapidly developing area, the WWTP is already near its treatment capacity and needs to be expanded. A “Meet the Contractor” meeting was held in late May for neighbors to get a better understanding of the project and address any questions from those near the plant. Construction started this spring and is expected to wrap up in late fall 2022. Presently, the contractor is in the initial phases of installing plant equipment.

As these projects progress you can look forward to detailed updates in future newsletters. To sign up to receive our newsletter online or by mail at sariverauthority.org/utilities.
Save Money with Winter Averaging

SARIVERAUTHORITY.ORG
FALL 2021

Saving water throughout the winter months can save you money throughout the year. Since the San Antonio River Authority (River Authority) sewer charges are based on your average winter water use, using less water in the winter can add up to savings year-round.

Winter averaging takes the amount of water used in a home during three complete billing cycles from mid-November to mid-March to calculate your sewer fee for the whole year beginning the following July 1. By upgrading to water efficient appliances and fixtures or turning off your irrigation system you can lower your River Authority sewer bill for the next year.

For more information on how the sewer portion of your water bill is calculated please see our website at https://www.sariverauthority.org/public-services/utilities/wastewater-billing-information.

Employee Highlight: Jimmy Hograves

Jimmy Hograves started with the San Antonio River Authority (River Authority) in March 2011 as a Plant Maintenance Crewman. His passion and drive were quickly recognized, and he was promoted to Electrician Apprentice within 8 months.

Around the Utilities Department, Jimmy is known for his dedication to the job and his coworkers. He exemplifies stewardship in the maintenance of the Utilities plants, always ensuring the best quality effluent or water discharged into the creeks that receive the treated outflow from our wastewater treatment plants. His can-do attitude and professionalism have led to a quicker turn-around time in projects and an increase in efficiency.

Jimmy continues to educate and improve himself. Within the first 3 years on the job, he obtained his Wastewater C and D licenses as well as his Commercial Driver’s License. Jimmy doesn’t stop at his own personal growth. He genuinely cares about his coworkers; Jimmy makes time to assist others with both personal and professional challenges, often coaching his team outside of his normal working hours. It is his extensive knowledge and relentless work ethic that have propelled Jimmy through the ranks at the River Authority. In his 10 years, Jimmy has been promoted 3 times and currently holds the position of Utilities Crew Leader.

His persistent enthusiasm and stewardship have led to Jimmy being recognized as a reliable employee and leader. He is known for coming in at all-hours and has even helped in operating the Lock and Dam and Riverwalk gates during electrical failures.

In his spare time, Jimmy likes to hunt and fish. More than anything else, he loves to spend time with his 3-year-old daughter and the rest of his family. All of us at the River Authority agree that Jimmy deserves recognition for going above and beyond to support the Utilities Department. Thank you, Jimmy!